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FOUR SERMONS
ON THE
DIVINITY OF CHRIST,

BY THE LATE
Rev. JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

RECTOR OF
Weston Favell, and Collingtree in the County of Northampton,

AND AUTHOR OF
MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS, &c.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
FOUR OTHER SERMONS,

Faithfully transcribed from the original SHORT-
HAND of the AUTHOR.

L O N D O N :

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MDCCLXXIX.



P R E F A C E.

THESE Sermons were transcribed from the Short-Hand M. S. of the Rev. Mr. JAMES HERVEY, by the Desire of his Brother the late Mr. *William Hervey*, Wine-Merchant, in *London*. That they are the genuine Productions of the Author of the *Meditations among the Tombs*, and the *Contemplations, Dialogues*, and *Letters*, no Man of Sense and Taste, (when he has read them,) can possibly *doubt* : And that the Subjects of these Discourses are of the utmost Importance and Use, no serious Christian can possibly *deny*.

The first four Sermons are on that glorious and fundamental Article of all revealed Religion, the Godhead of *Christ* ;

the fifth describes, in a very lively manner, the Nature of evangelical Repentance; the sixth treats on the great Duty, Advantages, and Pleasure of searching the Scriptures; and the two last Sermons treat on the Nature of our Love to GOD, in a most pleasing and delightful Manner. Every true Christian must acknowledge that the Divinity of *Christ* is the Basis of all vital Religion; and that Repentance, searching the Scriptures, and Love to GOD, constitute the main Parts of the Superstructure: So that whilst true Religion shall exist in our Nation, these Sermons will never be unimportant or out of Use.

They are peculiarly suited to raise heavenly Thoughts, and holy Affections, at the Lord's Table; and in that point of View, I would respectfully recommend them to Believers in *Christ* of every Denomination.

What can be of greater Importance and Use, than to contemplate the true and eternal Divinity of the Son of GOD
when

P R E F A C E. ▼

when we approach the Memorials of his Death and Satisfaction? The Godhead of *Christ* is the chief Wonder and Glory of the Christian Religion.—It is this great Truth of divine Revelation that opens to us most clearly the full Character of the Deity, and shews us all the Beauty of the Nature of GOD—This inexpressibly raises our Ideas of the Character and Dignity of the Lord *Jesus*; and displays his Grandeur, Fulness, and Beauty, above all Imagination.—This precious Truth endears the New Testament to every true Believer in the World: It enhances the Dignity, and demonstrates the Necessity, Usefulness, and Pleasure of the sacred Scriptures—It exceedingly endears the Person and Influences of the holy Spirit, as the great Author of all those Discoveries and Truths of divine Revelation.

The Doctrine of the Divinity of *Christ* shews the utmost Terror of the inflexible Justice of GOD in demanding and receiving full Satisfaction for Sin, by

the Sufferings and Death of a Person so transcendently excellent and divine.—It represents, in a Light as bright as seven Suns, the perfect Redemption, the glorious Sacrifice, and infinite Satisfaction, paid by the Redeemer to an almighty Conqueror for Captives; offered by a great High Priest to an injured Monarch for Rebels; made by a mighty Surety to a righteous Judge for Criminals.—This great Truth of *Christ's* Divinity, evinces the dreadful Nature of Sin above all Thought; it shews Sin to be an infinite Evil, objectively considered, as it strikes at an infinite GOD; and an infinite Evil, extensively considered, as it fixes a Stain in the Soul through an infinite Duration, unless it be washed out by the Blood of *Christ*. Here you see the Filth and Pollution of Sin, as it is a most horrid Deformity; and here you see the Guilt and Rebellion of Sin as it is a most dreadful Offence, hated by GOD, and punished with all the Force and Vengeance of his Soul. The Doctrine of *Christ's* Divinity infinitely enhances

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enhances the Dignity and Value of immortal Souls. In the Light of *Christ's* Godhead and Satisfaction, you see a Soul to be of more worth than the whole Newtonian System of material Nature, even if it were multiplied into ten Thousand such Systems; yea, we may go higher still, and affirm that GOD by purchasing the Soul with his own Blood, has shewn it to be of more Worth than a thousand Légions of Angels.

This glorious Truth of Revelation has the highest and happiest Tendency to give all possible Encouragement to awakened Sinners to return to GOD. The Lord *Jesus*, as GOD incarnate, is a most able, suitable, and willing Saviour to remove all the Plagues of a dark Mind, a guilty Conscience, and a rebellious Heart.—His Blood will silence all our Doubts and Fears.—His Atonement has levelled all Mountains in the Way to Heaven.—His Wisdom will unravel all Plots.—And his Death will
answer

answer all the Charges that Justice, and Conscience, and Satan, can bring against us : *Christ*, as GOD-man, can suit all our noblest Powers and Passions, as he is the supreme Truth, the supreme Good, and the supreme Beauty; and he can and will shew us all our best Friends in Heaven and Earth.

The Divinity of *Christ*, is the Spring of all vital Religion in the Souls of Men. All true Religion flows from the divine Nature, Will, and Life of *Christ*: All true Religion consists in a Likeness to *Christ*, and terminates in *Christ* as the ultimate End of immortal Souls.

The true and proper Godhead of *Christ*, is the Life and Glory of all public Worship, and the Beauty and Pleasure of all outward Ordinances ; without his Presence, all the Institutions of Religion have no Life or Force.

The Divinity of *Christ*, is the Life and Glory of his three Offices or Employ-
ments

ments for the Salvation of Sinners; his Godhead fills his prophetic Office with boundless Light and Wisdom to suit our Darkneſs and Folly.—It fills his prieſtly Office with infinite Dignity to ſuit our Guilt.—It fills his kingly Office with boundless Power to ſuit our Corruption and ſubdue our Rebellion againſt GOD. O! how ſafely and delightfully may a burthened, diſtreſſed Conſcience, reſoſe its utmoſt Confidence in *Chriſt*.

The glorious Godhead of *Chriſt* ſecures the happy final Iſſue of all our Tranſactions with GOD at Death and for Eternity. In the Divinity and Satisfaction of *Chriſt*, we have infinite Conſolations againſt the Terrors of Death; becauſe *Chriſt*, as the mighty GOD-man by his bloody, curſed, and terrible Death, and his triumphant Victory over this King of Terrors, has wiped off the Re- proach of Death, and made it honour- able for us to die under his Smiles.—He has conquered the Sharpneſs of Death, ſubdued its Power, extracted its Sting, diſarmed

disarmed its Terrors, and quite altered the Property of Death, for all Believers in the World!

Thus we see the unspeakable Excellence and Usefulness of that glorious Doctrine treated on in these Sermons, by one of the most amiable and eloquent of all *English* Writers. We have seen that this Doctrine discovers to us, in the clearest Light, the beautiful Nature of GOD,—the Glory of *Christ's* Person and Love,—the Dignity and Sweetness of the Scriptures,—and the Excellence of their Author, the blessed Spirit,—the Terrors of divine Justice,—the Perfection and Reality of *Christ's* Satisfaction,—the infinite Evil in the Nature of Sin,—the unutterable Worth of immortal Souls,—the rich Encouragements to a distressed Sinner to come to GOD by *Christ*,—the Spring of all vital Religion and generous good Works,—the Life, Power, and Beauty of all public Worship and divine Institutions,—the Riches and Glory of *Christ's* three Offices,—
and

and the only Basis or Ground for a final and happy Issue of all our Affairs at Death, and in a boundless Eternity.

If such are the Uses of this precious Truth, what Christian is there who would not covet to make these Discourses the Companion of his Bosom and his Closet? Who would not choose to lodge these admirable Thoughts in the inner Cabinet of his Heart? To the Blessing of GOD our Saviour (whose Cause is here pleaded with Brightness of Thought and Elegance of Style) I commit them; praying that every true Believer may find the same Comfort which the Author did in his Life and Death.

JULY 2, 1779.

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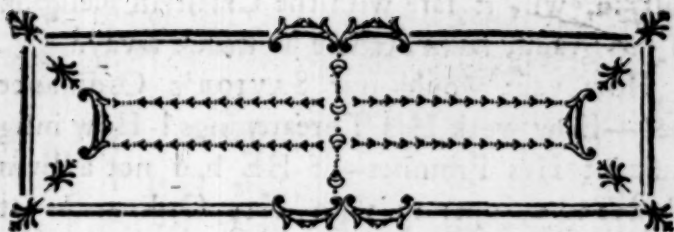
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THERE are more Sermons of the late Rev.
Mr. JAMES HERVEY in Manuscript, which
shall be published if these meet with due Encou-
ragement from the Christian World.

SERMON



S E R M O N I.

The Divinity of CHRIST.

Titus I. 3. GOD OUR SAVIOR.

THE Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, is the most important Article of Christianity.—'Tis, if I may so speak, the staple Truth of our Bible;—the great Foundation, which supports the whole Structure of our holy Religion!—'Tis the Root which nourishes, and the Foundation, which feeds ALL the Doctrines of Scripture, and ALL the Hopes of a Christian.—Take this away, and the whole Institution of Christianity falls at once. When Sampson tore away the supporting Pillars*, the whole Roof fell in, and the whole House became a ruinous Heap;—so,

* Judges xvi. 30.

B

just

just so, will it fare with the Christian Religion, if this grand, main Article be struck away.

How vain would our SAVIOR's Ordinances be!—How weak His Threatenings! How insignificant His Promises—if HE had not a divine Power to co-operate with His Ordinances—to execute His Threatenings, and to fulfil His Promises!—But when HE that Speaks,—that Threatens,—that Promises, is none less than the SUPREME GOD, every Thing puts on another Aspect.—Then every Word acquires unknown Weight!—His Institutions challenge the devoutest Performance.—This stamps a Grandeur, and puts an infinite Value upon His Example and Precepts.—This gives a Fulness, a Sufficiency, and glorious Perfection to the Satisfaction HE has made for *Sins*.—This makes the Method of Salvation HE has appointed, worthy of all Acceptation;—worthy the Contrivance of unsearchable Wisdom;—worthy the Accomplishment of unbounded Goodness; and worthy of the Dependence of the whole Race of fallen Man,—on which they may surely, comfortably, joyfully rest all their Hopes and Expectation here, and hereafter.

Since then this Point is of such exceeding great Moment, it concerns Us to be thoroughly, immoveably founded in the Belief of it!—Let Us then consider some of the main Arguments which
render

render the blessed Truth sure, and undeniable;—
which may abundantly convince, and assure Us—
that our SAVIOR is GOD, or (as my Text
has it), that GOD is our SAVIOR.

I shall prove this,

- I. From the Works HE wrought.
- II. From the Honors that were paid HIM.
- III. From the Nature of His Mediatorial Office.

I. We have an evident Proof of our LORD's
Divinity from the Works HE wrought.

- I. From the Miracles HE wrought.
- II. From HIS foretelling Things to come.
- III. From HIS forgiving Sins.
- IV. From HIS knowing and searching the Heart.

I. WE have an Evidence of CHRIST's Di-
vinity from the Miracles HE wrought.—Not one,
or two, but ALL Manner of miraculous Opera-
tions were done by CHRIST.—They were the
daily Triumphs of HIS Art, the continual Issues
of HIS Divine Power, and Goodness.—Now, as
ordinary Works shew the Ingenuity of the Work-
man; so the Works of our LORD JESUS
CHRIST declare the Divinity of this great
PERFORMER.—HE heals stubborn, inveterate,
long contracted Diseases in an Instant!—Nay,

HE heals Diseases, that human Art pronounced incurable, only with a Word!—HE opens the Eyes that were born Blind, and pours Day upon those sightless Orbs!—HE cleanses the filthy Lepers with a powerful Touch;—Yes, at His sovereign Touch the noysome Crust falls off, and the Blood purifies in the Veins; the Flesh becomes clear as the Flesh of a little Child; and the whole Habit of vitiated Nature is corrected in a Twinkling of an Eye.—Not all the Drugs in the World;—or the Simples that grow upon a thousand Hills, could have wrought such a Cure! But CHRIST sends His Word, His all commanding Word, and heals!—The racking Diseases are turned into perfect Ease.—The enfeebling Diseases into vigorous Health! Nay, the very Touch of His Cloathes staunches the Issue of Blood.—Physicians had been consulted, Art had made its utmost Efforts, and confessed itself baffled!—But that which was impracticable to Physic, was effected by the Hem of our SAVIOR's Garment! †

But Diseases of the Mind, are more difficult to be restored, as well as more grievous to be endured than Distempers of the Body! Behold then, the ALMIGHTY PHYSICIAN healing the Lunatics!—Those that are sunk in Melancholy, or

* John ix. 5, 6, 7.

† Mark v. 24. and 34.

agitated

agitated with a precipitate Madness, HE reduces to their right Senses !

But Dæmons are more powerful than bodily Disorders.—Why here as a *Dæmoniac* ! He cuts himself with Flints, and strikes Terror into all that comes near Him !—He bursts the strongest Chains as scorched Thread.—And as for his Fetters, they are as rotten Stubble to Him ! Among the Tombs He rambles, and never ceases Day, nor Night. — Behold ! The adorable JESUS speaks, and the Dæmon departs !—The Poor harassed Mortal returns to his right Mind, and enjoys the calm Possession of his own Soul.—He that before was more frantic, and unmanageable than the savage Beasts, now becomes meek, and gentle as a harmless Lamb *.—Let passionate People remember this, and apply to CHRIST !—Oh ! How often does Passion drive them headlong upon the most unreasonable Practices ; they can scarce cure this headstrong Sally of their Spirits ;—but CHRIST can both restrain and subdue them.

But the Dead are in a more desperate State, than those afflicted with Sicknefs !—There is less Hope of their reviving, than of the Dæmoniacs being dispossessed.—Lo ! then, our LORD extends His Power to the Grave ! HE bids Death surrender his Captives.—His Word fetches back

* Mark v. 4.

the departed Spirits.—HE re-enkindles the extinguished Lamp.—The congealed Blood renews its Flow. The icy Flesh is re-animated with new Warmth; and Lazarus's putrifying Limbs recover their long resigned Activity*.—See then, Ye, who are slow of Heart to believe the GODHEAD of our SAVIOR, here is a Spirit come back from the invifible World on purpose to bear Witnefs to the important Truth!—The dead Bodies arife from the Duft at HIS awful Call, and attest HIS infinite Power; and will be the everlafting Reproach, if they are not the cleareft Conviction of all Infidelity.

But can the verieft Elements underftand CHRIST's GODHEAD. GOD oftentimes fays, that *He holds the Water in the Hollow of his Hand*†.---*That He gathereth the Winds in His Fift*‡; that *He Walks upon the Wings of the Whirlwind*§.—Now do thefe obey the LORD JESUS CHRIST? I fhall only produce one Inftance that may ferve, inftead of all.—'Tis peculiarly proper for them to confider, that occupy their Bufinefs in great Waters, whole Lives and Fortunes feem to lay fo much at the Mercy of the Winds.

Let us read at our Leifure the eighth Chapter of St. Matthew!—With what grand, and mag-

* John xi. 29, 30.
 † Pl. xviii. 10.

† If. xl. 12.

‡ Prov. xxx. 4.

nificent Images do the 23d. and the following verses present us!—The Winds roaring.—The Waves raging.—The Ship tossed by the one and dashed by the other;—while it is even covered by the rolling Seas.—The poor Shipmen at their Wits-end; under all the Agonies of fear;—Confusion in their Faces, Despair in their Voices.—When, lo! The Holy Jesus awoke from his Sleep!—He saw Destruction approaching from every Quarter, but was nothing daunted.—He saw the Horror and Amazement of His Companions, but without being at all terrified.—When Heaven and Earth were mingling; His Soul was all this while serene!—Fearfulness, and Dread had overwhelmed the Sea-faring Men; but their LORD abode in sweet undisturbed Tranquility.—Behold! He arises from his Pillow with such a Majesty, and Sedateness, as flowed only from the Consciousness of His Almighty Power.—Could an Infidel have seen the Grandeur, and divine Serenity, that now sat on our REDEEMER's Countenance, sure the Sight must have fetched Him on his Knees, and have brought from his Lips an Acknowledgment of his great Divinity! Hark!—He speaks!—The warring Elements revere His Accents, and listen to the solemn Voice! The raging and resounding Waters cannot drown it! The impetuous and headlong Winds cannot

diffipate it; nor dares the mighty Tempest disobey it!—In an Instant, the Winds are hush'd; the Seas subside: The Storm ceases, and gently glides away into a great Calm!

On this Occasion, how properly may we use the Psalmist's beautiful Expostulation! *What aileth thee, O thou Sea, that thou fleddest,** and *Ye furious Winds, that Ye were driven back!*—Ye raging Winds, that you sunk into Silence!—And thou boiling Deep, that thou wast so suddenly, so perfectly calm!—Was it the Injunctions of a Man, that thou regardest?—Was it a mortal Tongue that reached to thy utmost Shores, and pierced to thy lowest Deeps, and controuled thy inconsiderate Motions?—Dost thou stand in Awe of a Son of Adam?—Thou, that hast buried Millions of their floating Carcasses in a watry Grave!—O, no! This was the LORD's doing!—It was the incarnate DEITY that spoke!—The Earth, (says an inspired Writer,) shall tremble at the Look of Him!—If HE does but touch the Mountains, they shall Smoke!—And, no Wonder then that the World of Waters observe His Commands, and was dutifully submissive to HIS HIGH DECREE.

See then, the Seas adore the BLESSED JESUS! The immense Deep confesses HIS Arm to be omnipotent, HIS Command to be uncontrollable;—

* Psalm cxiv. 5.

and so His glorious DIVINITY unquestionable.---
Let us, when we hear the sweeping Winds, and
view the tremendous Ocean, call to Mind this
marvellous Instance of our LORD's irresistible
Dominions!---Let us at such Times, lift our
Voice, and laud the Blessed Jesus, in the solemn
Language of the Psalmist "The Waters saw
" thee, O GOD, the Waters saw thee, and were
" afraid: The Depths also were obedient, and
" fled at thy great Rebuke."

I shall leave my dear Readers, with these
Thoughts upon their Minds---hoping they will
serve to beget high, and adoring Notions of their
glorious REDEEMER!---Only shall observe,
that what has been mentioned may instruct the
Sailor, whom to address in the Hour of Danger!
May also teach him the Wisdom of securing an
Interest in the LORD JESUS CHRIST, whose
divine Word, even the Winds, and Sea obey.

S E R M O N II.

The Divinity of C H R I S T.

Titus I. 3. GOD OUR SAVIOR.

FROM these Words we took Occasion to consider that great, and glorious Article of our Religion, the GODHEAD of its AUTHOR;--- the Divinity of CHRIST, as it was most convincingly apparent from the Miracles HE wrought.--- Let us now proceed to shew how it is further Evident,

- I. From HIS foretelling Things to come.
- II. From HIS forgiving Sins.
- III. From His knowing and searching the Heart.

I. Our Lord Jesus Christ's Divinity is evident from HIS foretelling Things to come.---Who but GOD is possessed of this Power!---Yet the Lord Jesus Christ exercised it on innumerable Occasions!---Nay, St. Peter, declares, it was the SPIRIT of CHRIST, which enabled all the ancient Prophets to discover future Things;---A Ray
from

from his all-comprehending Wisdom gave them their borrowed Insight into Futurity.---CHRIST knew beforehand the Death HE should suffer: And gave a particular Description of it!---HE saw the Crown of Thorns long before they were platted!---HE was apprized of the rugged Nails, long before the Soldiers sharpened the Points, or hammered them through his Bones.---HE spoke of the cruel Buffettings, the despiteful Spittings, and the vile Indignities long before the insolent Multitude made HIM undergo them.---HE warned Peter of his perfidiousness long before it was brought into Action!---And not only spoke of his Resurrection, but fixed the precise Time of its taking Place.---Long before its Destruction, HE saw the utter ruin of Jerusalem.---HE saw the hostile Troops besieging their Walls;---The Roman Standard entering their Temple?---HE saw their stately Buildings levelled with the Ground;---the unexampled Slaughter of its miserable Inhabitants.---HE saw the impending Vengeance of Heaven before it fell, and the dismal Distress of the devoted Jews before it overtook them.---All this HE saw, and gave a particular Prediction of it, when the Executions of this Vengeance was scarcely born! So particular a Prediction that it looked more like a History of what was past, than a Prophecy of what was to come!

Behold

Behold then, the Lord Jesus in this noble Point of Light!--Behold HIM in his prophetic, ALL foretelling Character!--His Eye runs forward through all the downward Traçts of Futurity!--With a wondrous Survey HE looks into *all*, even the most remote Contingencies!--HE saw what future Ages will produce, and what Nations yet Unborn will act!--And is not this the adorable GOD. Before whom all Things are naked, and open!--To whom future Time is present!--Persons unborn, are as though they existed!--Who sees the Events that are unthought of as clearly as when they are accomplished!--Who in the Scripture Phrase calls the Things that are not, as though they were!--

II. The Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ is further evident from his forgiving Sins!--When Moses proclaims the Name of GOD, that GOD who led Israel through the Desert,—who wrought all the Miracles in Egypt, and Wonders in the Field of Zoan, what does HE stile Him!--Why this is the glorious Character HE ascribes to HIM, —*The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious--long suffering, abundant in Goodness and Truth, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression and Sin!**—We see 'tis the sole Property of the adorable GOD to forgive Sins! This is a Part of HIS incommuni-

* Exod. xxxiv. 6.

cable Glory.---This is His Memorial, that whereby HE will be known through all Generations!---Now is not CHRIST invested with this Privilege,---How often does HE say to the miserable Objects brought to HIM, *Be of good Cheer, thy Sins are forgiven thee!*---How does HE always ratify this permission, by working an immediate Miracle.---So that if any should say, a cunning Impostor may speak such Words, and pronounce a Form of Absolution:---Why, to stop the Mouth of this Objection, GOD sets his Seal to the Grant; the Disease is instantly cured, and becomes a glorious Credential of our *Lord's* Prerogative.---The Fetters of Lameness falling off, from the Legs, or the thick Veil of Blindness vanishing from the Eyes, proclaim his equal Power to blot out the Hand Writing of *Sin* that is against us.---

Was CHRIST a mere Man, Oh! What intolerable Arrogance were this! 'Twould be the very Transcript of *Lucifer's* Pride!---It would be a most atrocious Encroachment upon the uncreated Honors of the Deity!---And would the Thunders keep silence?---Would the Lightnings sleep, if CHRIST, being a Man only, had thus made Himself equal with GOD? No!---We find the Earth opening, and swallowing up *Dathan* and *Abiram*, for a vastly lesser Crime!---For no other Reason, but because they intrenched
upon

upon the priestly Office, and presumed to officiate in the Order of Aaron!---If GOD so severely avenged this Piece of bold Presumption, judge, how much more dreadfully HE would have punished JESUS CHRIST for an infinitely greater, and more savage Presumption!---But instead of that, HE declares Him to be HIS dearly beloved SON!---HE commands all Creatures to honor the SON, as they honor the Father.---A plain Proof, that this Practice was no unwarrantable Invasion of the divine Prerogative; but an Acknowledgement of his just, and undoubted Right!---

Come then, let Us fall on our Knees at his Footstool!---Let us be struck with Reverence, and pay Him the Homage due to his divine Nature! For who can forgive Sins, but GOD alone! Who, but the offended SOVEREIGN can pardon Rebellious, and spare the Rebel? Who but the Lord can remit the Debt, and discharge the Debtor?---By this then we know, and are sure that Christ is the eternal SOVEREIGN, and LORD of ALL, because, HE pardons our Offences, and remits our Trespases!---In his own Name, HE issues out an Act of Grace, and proclaims a general Indemnity to poor penitent Sinners.---And can we any longer doubt of His being King of Heaven?---

III. The Divinity of CHRIST is evident from his knowing and searching the Hearts of Men!---The Psalmist reckons it as one of the incommunicable Attributes of Jehovah, that *He knoweth the Thoughts of Man*; and did not the ever blessed Jesus exercise this Power?---Did not He perceive the Thoughts of Men, before they were framed into Words, or cloathed with Language?---Did not He dive into their deepest Designs?---Did not he penetrate through all their Disguises, and discover the latent Spring of all their Actions?---Yes!---The Minds of Men were naked before Him. --Nothing escaped His all-searching Observation.---Even the hidden Springs of Darkness were clear as the Day; transparent as the pure crystal to His divine Eye!---He told the Multitudes that flocked to him, by what corrupt Principles they were stimulated; that they followed him, --- not to hear his instructive Discourses, but to be fed with the Loaves!---He saw the murderous Intentions of the Pharisees, while they were only hatching them in their dark Bosoms!---He knew *Judas* to be a Traytor, in spite of all his artful Disguises, and specious Hypocrisy!---Others looked upon him as a holy Preacher, and as a Saint of the first Rank; but He perceived, and pronounced him to be a Devil, long before the devilish Nature broke out so notoriously.---

I

Again,

Again, The Scriptures declare, that the Heart of Man is in the Hand of the Lord; that the Preparations of the Heart of Man are of the LORD JEHOVAH; that GOD only can give a new Heart, and create a right Spirit within Men.---But how often has Christ done this, and thereby evinced Himself to be that OMNIPOTENT BEING, to whom nothing is impossible? Did HE not turn the Hearts of all the Disciples to his blessed Self, only with a Word.---Did HE not engage them to leave their Kindreds and Parents; to quit their own Home;---to abandon their Trade,---and relinquish all that they had in the World, on purpose to follow HIM, wheresoever HE went?---How did HE prevail with them to make this absolute Renunciation?---Did HE use powerful Persuasives, and enticing Arguments?---No!---HE only speaks, and it is done.---Follow me, HE cries; and immediately they throw up all their worldly Interests,---bid Adieu to their nearest Relations, and resign all that is valuable in this Life!---HE speaks, and the Ties of Nature drop off;---the Bonds of natural Affection are dissolved; Children forsake their Parents, and cleave unto a stranger!---'Twas only a Word;---but a Word clothed with OMNIPOTENCY; such a Word as that ALL creating Word, which said in the Beginning, Let there be Light, and there was Light; Let there be a World, and a World there was!

Again,

Again, Did not a Look from our Lord's Eye, renew the Heart of Zaccheus?---The Holy Scriptures represent Him as an Oppressor, and Extortioner: One who made it his Business to grind the Faces of the Poor, and raise himself a Fortune by all Manner of unjust Practices. One would almost despair of recalling so egregious a Sinner.---A Sinner, that was hardened in Villainy, and a Veteran in Iniquity.---But, behold, a Glance from Christ's Eye converts him! He climbed the Tree a Sinner, and came down the Tree a new Creature! A compassionate and powerful Look from the Sun of Righteousness renewed the Temper of his Soul, just as the visible Sun renews the Face of the Earth, when it rises glorious, in the Months of Spring.---The most eloquent Orators have often complained of the Hardness of Men's Hearts; even *Isaiah* himself, the most sublime, and pathetic, I suppose, that ever pleaded for GOD, and Goodness; he even complains of the Insensibility of Men's Minds, how unaffected they were with his Doctrine; yea steeled against his Threatnings, and deaf to his Persuasions, insomuch, that they could make no Impressions upon them.---But what that glorious Prophet could not effect, with all the Force of Language, divine and inspired Language; behold! the blessed JESUS accomplishes with a piercing View from his Eye.---Oh the unknown Power of JESUS CHRIST! To turn the
C Heart,

Heart, the obdurate, sinful Heart; and only with a Look! Who can deny HIM the Glory of the GODHEAD, who thus possesses the unalienable Attribute, and exercises the unparalleled Power of the GODHEAD?---His Eye sees through the disguised Heart!---His Eye reforms the vicious Heart. His Eye does all these Things, and is it not Divine?

Oh! that we who have heard, may also experience the Power of it! That CHRIST would cast down a powerful Look upon us all, and send us every one to our Houses new Men: send Home the Proud humble! the Ignorant enlightened, the Careless awakened, and quickened.

To conclude, We have seen our LORD JESUS CHRIST's absolute, and unlimited Dominion over the Kingdoms of Nature, the Powers of Hell, and the Hearts of Men.---We have seen HIM healing such bodily Diseases as were to us incurable.---Quelling the tumultuous Winds, and calming the tempestuous Seas, which are to us yet more uncontrollable.---Dispossessing Devils, which are of all malicious Beings, most formidable.---We have beheld HIM, looking *Souls* into newness of Life. ---Speaking Tempests into an immediate Calm. Touching inveterate Distempers into perfect Health; commanding Devils from human Bodies, and human Bodies from the Putrefaction of the Grave. And can we forbear, oh! can we any longer

longer forbear falling at his Knees, and crying out with Thomas, MY LORD, AND MY GOD?

We have heard Him foretelling remote Contingencies;---discovering the Secrets of Futurity; and is not this the OMNISCIENT GOD?---We have heard Him dispensing Pardon to guilty Sinners, cancelling the Debts of Men, and Books of Heaven; and is not this the OMNIPOTENT GOD?---Yes? 'Tis undoubtedly so! It cannot be otherwise.---These are as unequivocal Proofs of His Divinity; as his sleeping and waking are Evidences of His Manhood!---He that

Works all Manner of Miracles,

Foretells Things to come,

That forgives Sins,

That knows the Heart, and changes it too,
must be GOD, the true, everlasting, and infinite GOD.---

Let me now earnestly intreat you to lay deep in your Memories this glorious Truth, and the convincing Arguments that support it.---Meditate on them.---Let them sink deep into your Hearts; imprint them in lively Characters never to be effaced.---So shall we be better prepared for the further Prosecution, and the practical Improvement of this important Subject, if we live to another Lord's Day.---Or if our Days be numbered, and our Souls required before another Sab-

bath approaches, we shall quit the World, with less Reluctance, and enter into Eternity with more Readiness, if we always remember that our REDEEMER is supreme.---That our REDEEMER is the GOD that will judge us, and dispose of us everlastingly; not according to our own Worthiness, but according to his own rich, and superabundant Mercies; those Mercies, which he most illustriously, most marvellously displayed, when GOD was manifested in the Flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of Angels, preached unto the Gentile World, believed on in the World, and received up into Glory.

S E R-

S E R M O N III.

The Divinity of C H R I S T.

Titus I. 3. GOD OUR SAVIOR.

DID I know any Subject of greater Glory, or of equal Importance; I should not desire your Consideration a third, and fourth Time, on the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST.—But there is no Doctrine of Christianity, that so well deserves our admiring Attention—no Point of Faith that we have so much need to be grounded and rivetted in!—None that displays the terrible, and amiable Attributes of the everlasting GOD like this!—None that gives such a Dignity to Christian Religion;—and declares the inestimable Worth of the human Soul like this! None yields so dreadful a View of GOD's inexorable Justice;—or so sweet a View of his infinitely tender Compassions!—None can flash such Terror into the Heart of an obdurate Sinner, or pour such Consolation into the Heart of a drooping Penitent!—None so exalts the GREAT REDEEMER;

MER; so debases fallen Man;—so powerfully promotes the Practice of true Holiness—But, hold—Let ME not attempt to set forth the supereminent Excellency, and Usefulness of this glorious Truth!—Lips cannot speak it!—Eternity will not discover it!—Let us rather proceed according to our first Purpose to consider some of the other Arguments, which prove and illustrate it.—Though in strict Equity there is need of no other Proof, than the Words of my Text.—Let it be instead of a thousand Arguments—that Scripture, unerring, infallible Scripture, has declared that GOD is our SAVIOR.—All the Powers of Hell are unable to blot out this from the Bible!—Why then should any Cavils of Men be able to erase the Belief of it from our Hearts?

But to proceed.—The Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is evident,

II. From the Honors that were paid HIM.

III. From the Nature of HIS Mediatorial Office.

II. From the Honors paid Him.

I. By Men on Earth.

II. By all Nature at his Death.

III. By all the Angels in Heaven.

I. Our LORD JESUS CHRIST's Divinity is evident from Honors paid HIM by Men on Earth,—

Earth.—How often do We find People falling down before HIM, and worshipping HIM?—How often do the Apostles call Him GOD?—How often do the Prophets give Him that honorable Title?—What does Thomas mean by his devout Acknowledgement, when throwing Himself at the Feet of JESUS CHRIST in a Posture of Adoration, He cries out, MY LORD, AND MY GOD?—What can Saint John mean, when He says—THE WORD WAS GOD?—When He attributes the Creation of all Things to HIM; and declares that not a single Being was made without HIM?—Why does St. Paul cry out with Admiration,—*Great is the Mystery of Godliness,* GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH?—What GOD?—Why the great GOD, the infinite GOD, undoubtedly!—'Tis this, and this only, that makes His Incarnation, so unconceivable a Mystery,—otherwise there would be nothing so inexpressibly strange in it.—Why are Infants baptized in Christ's Name, as well as in the Name of the Father, and the Holy Ghost?—Did We *piously*, or *innocently* devote our tender Offspring to Him in this solemn Manner, if He were not really, truly, strictly GOD?—It would be Idolatry to offer slain Bullocks, or bleeding Goats at his Altar, if He were not the TRUE, the GREAT JEHOVAH;—and sure it would be a more crying Idolatry to dedicate our Children to

HIS Service in the everlasting Covenant, if HE were not the true, the great JEHOVAH.—What means that apostolical Benediction, which is the Close of almost every Epistle?—The Grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the Love of GOD, and the Communion of the HOLY GHOST, be with You all evermore—Amen? Is not CHRIST here sent on an equal Footing, with the uncreated GOD, and the SPIRIT that proceedeth from HIM?—Does not the whole Bent of the sacred Writings honor the SON, as they honor the FATHER?—Do not Persons inspired, and uninspired, Prophets, and Apostles confess his GODHEAD?—Does not the whole Church, throughout all the World acknowledge his Divinity?—Yes!—They unanimously pay HIM divine Worship,---ascribe unto HIM divine Honors, and so unanimously allow HIS Divine Nature.

II. The Divinity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is evident from the Honors paid Him by all Nature at His Death.---Even when He hung upon the Cross---numbered,---but not an Accomplice with Transgressors!---In that last Degree of His Humiliation, what clear Demonstrations of His GODHEAD, may an impartial Observer discern,---Oh! how did His Divinity break thro' these thick Clouds, and illustriously display itself!---HE appeared to be GOD

over

ever all, blessed for ever, when He stood condemned with the vilest of Men; and was made a Criminal for our Sakes!--Hark!--How He comforts the penitent Thief!--With what a just Assurance He promises Him an Admission into Paradise!--Behold, the wonderful SUFFERER!--Glorious, most sublimely glorious, even in his Infamy!--Powerful, infinitely powerful, though crucified in Weakness!--Behold HIM disposing of the celestial Bliss, even while HE is bathed in his own Blood,—tore with Nails; and expiring in Torments!--Those Hands, which were fastened with Irons to the fatal Tree,—those Hands snatched a poor Soul from the very Jaws of Destruction, and opened to Him the Gates of Bliss!--Who can this be that hath the Keys of Heaven, and Dominion over the Devil?—Who can this be,—but the King of Glory—the LORD OF HOSTS, the GOD, and Ruler of all Things!

Behold also the whole Creation sympathizing with his Sufferings.—The Rocks rending at his bitter Cry!--The Graves open when HE sinks in Death!--The Vail of the Temple is tore asunder, when the silver Cord of his Life is loosed!--The Sun withdraws at the Horror of his Agonies, and leaves the astonished World in Darkness!--And is not this the *great* GOD?—Did ever the whole Face of Nature go into mourning for any, but its CREATOR?—The Centurion before an Infidel,

Infidel, now becomes a Believer!—He now is convinced of the Divinity of the BLESSED JESUS:—These astonishing unheard of Events, overcome his Prejudices.—He smites upon his Breast, and full of Wonder proclaims aloud, “*Truly this was the SON OF GOD.*”—The Declaration of Dionysius is well known, and yet well worthy to be repeated on the Occasion.---That Philosopher observed the prodigious Eclipse, that attended our REDEEMER’S Crucifixion, and affirmed, that either Nature was dissolving, or the GOD of Nature dying.---Here we see the very Elements recognizing the Suffering SAVIOR’S Divinity, and speak terribly His GODHEAD in fearful Prodigies.---The very Heathens smite with the prodigious Sights, join in the Acknowledgements, and proclaim Him VERY GOD, OF VERY GOD.

III. The Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, is evident from the Honors paid Him by the Angels in Heaven.---Could I clear the Skies, and shew You the Transactions of the celestial World; ---what a Flood of Conviction would break upon your Souls?---Oh! could the Man of Arian Principles behold the divine Honors, that are offered to the blessed LORD JESUS in the Regions of Life, and Immortality.---There, all the heavenly Hosts render Him their incessant Tribute of Homage, and Adoration.---There’s no Ambition;

tion, no Strife among those blessed Spirits ;--- but who shall fall lowest at his Footstool, or raise their Voices highest in His Praises.---GOD has protested with his own awful Mouth, that His Honours HE will not give to another.---Yet HE has commanded the holy Angels to worship the LORD JESUS !---What then can we conclude--- from this Protestation, and this Command---but that GOD, the FATHER, and the ever blessed SON are one ?---That the LORD JEHOVAH, and the LORD JESUS are the same undivided glorious GODHEAD !---That whatever is done to the one, is done to the other.---Let all the Angels of GOD worship Him, saith the Holy Ghost.---O wonderful Words !---So glorious is a single Angel, that when one of these illustrious Beings appeared to St. John ;---struck with a reverential Awe, HE fell prostrate, to the Earth, and would have adored him !---O think then, think again, and again, how glorious the BLESSED JESUS is, who is worshipped, by unnumbered Armies of these Godlike Creatures !---I beheld, saith St. John in the Revelations, and I heard a Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the Beasts, and the Elders, and the Number of them was ten thousand Times ten thousand ; and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honor*

Honor and Glory, and Blessing.—And every Creature which is in Heaven, and on Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying—Blessing, and Honor, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever.*---

Let the Deist hear this, and tremble !---Let the Christian hear this, and rejoice !---The LAMB that was slain, is the Object of universal Adoration !---Heaven resounds with His Praises ! The Harps of Cherubim and Seraphim are tuned to celebrate His Perfections ! Thrones and Dominions, Principalities and Powers bow to our exalted REDEEMER, and lay all their Crowns at His Feet !

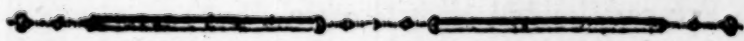
Let us now sum up our Evidence, and take a succinct View of the Glories, the divine Glories of JESUS CHRIST !---The Proofs, the incontestible Proofs of His great Divinity.---See, the Winds obeying HIM ;---the raging Tempests revering his Words ;---the raging Seas sinking into a Calm at His awful Command : All Manner of Diseases vanishing at His sacred Touch : ---Legions of Devils departing, and quitting their long possessed Habitation at His Rebuke !---The Dead, yea, the putrifying Carcasses arising at his Call, and returning to vigorous Life !--- See HIM exercising His prophetic Power,---penetrating the most distant Events ; and laying open

* Rev. v. 12, 13.

the Secrets of Futurity!---See HIM sitting on a Throne of Mercy, and forgiving Sins!---Cancelling our Debts, and obliterating our Guilt;---crossing the Books of Heaven---and sealing a Pardon to offending Man!---See HIM, not only looking into the Secrets of the Heart; but revealing them with his Eye; telling them, as well as discerning them, with a piercing Glance!---See HIM, honoured as GOD, by the wisest and holiest Men on Earth,---by the inspired Writers, and universal Church!---See HIM, honoured at his Death, by rending Rocks, opening Graves,---a darkened Sun, and the Confessions of Heathens!---See HIM, in his heavenly Kingdom filling the Throne of unapproachable Glory,---honoured by all the Hosts of Angels, and adored by the innumerable Company of glorified Spirits.---See, consider, and weigh all this; and then tell me, whether this JESUS can be any other than GOD, the uncreated GOD, who is over all, blessed for ever!---Is not HE GOD, who has the Keys of the Grave? Who holds the Sceptre of universal Nature? Who has the infernal Spirits in a Chain? And receives the Homage of all created Beings?---Yes!---This is a true Saying,---worthy of all Acceptation---proved beyond all Contradiction, that the same JESUS who came into the World to save Sinners, is the only living, and true GOD! 'Tis impossible

sible for Words to express—for Thoughts to conceive a more comfortable, joyous Truth!— And I think it is equally impossible for any Truth to receive a more various, more strong, more irrefragable Confirmation!

SERMON



S E R M O N IV.

The Divinity of C H R I S T.

Titus I. 3. GOD OUR SAVIOR.

ONCE more let me resume this noble Subject. —We shall then cease to discourse publicly upon it.—But, oh! may We never, never cease to meditate on it with all the Attention of an humble, grateful, wondering Mind.—I would not suspect my dear Hearers, to be weary of so glorious a Topic,—I know, and am sure, they that meditate on the Divinity of their dying SAVIOR, cannot be wearied with the repeated Contemplation of it!---They will rather come with augmented Pleasure, to every renewed Contemplation of it!---The more 'tis understood; the more it astonishes, and ravishes!--- New Charms, new Glories, new Comforts are continually opening themselves to the musing Mind! ---O!

---Oh! that We may henceforth seriously consider it!—Then You will not wonder that the Preacher insisted on it so often; but rather wonder that it should be ever out of his Mouth, or your Thoughts!

I come to the last Thing proposed, namely,

III. That our LORD JESUS CHRIST's Divinity is evident from the Nature of his mediatorial Office.—This mediatorial Office required that HE should

I. Bear the Wrath of GOD.

II. Make full Atonement for the Sins of Men, and

III. Sanctify their depraved fallen Nature!—None of which could be performed by any created Being.

I. The Divinity of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is evident from His bearing the Wrath of GOD! —This the mediatorial Office required!—But could a Creature do it?—As well might a feeble Feather support the tottering World.—Why, all the Heavens are to GOD as Nothing and Vanity! —The Earth trembles at the Look of HIM!—If HE do but touch the Mountains, they shall smoke!—And could a Creature endure his fiercest Wrath?—His Wrath hurled Legions of apostate Spirits, from the Heights of Heaven to the Depths of Hell! And could a Creature, a mere
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Creature stand uncrushed under it?—No more than the aspen Leaf could arrest the stripping Whirlwind in its Course!—No more than the Spiders Web could stand firm, and impregnable against a Battery of Cannon!—Alas! were the noblest Creatures that *are* made, that *can* be made; were they *all* to interpose between us, and the Sword of vengeful Justice, it would cut its easy Way through all their Hearts, and drink the Blood of the Saints.—Tell me, ye Angels, that excel in Strength, could Ye have born the avenging Arm of OMNIPOTENCE? Durst the boldest Seraphs have attempted this vast Enterprize?—Alas! the fierce Anger of the ALMIGHTY would have consumed them as Tow, and burnt them up as Stubble!---'Tis well then, my Soul,---'tis well for thee, and thy Fellow Transgressors, that thy MEDIATOR was divine!---Otherwise, thou wouldst still have been the Object of eternal Vengeance.---And, 'tis sure, O my Soul, 'tis equally sure, that thy MEDIATOR is divine, otherwise HE could never have sustained the Severity of inexorable Justice, and have accomplished it all for *Us*.

II. The *same* Divinity is proved from His making full Atonement for the Sins of Men!---Sin is a Breach of the divine Law; and nothing but a divine Satisfaction can atone for it.---Sin

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is an Offence against an infinite Majesty; and therefore cannot be remitted, without an infinite Reconciliation!---No Creature, no, not the highest, and most exalted could expiate such a Crime, or atone for such a Provocation!---The Life of the noblest Creature is of a contracted, scanty Value,---it bears no Manner of Proportion to the enormous, unknown Malignity of Sin!---Besides the Life of a Creature is not its own!---It is GOD's Property.---So that should the whole Race of Beings lay down their Lives; should they all become bleeding Victims for Mankind, it would only be resigning what was none of their own:---Nothing more than giving up to GOD, what was His own before!---HE would be under no Obligation to His depending Creatures for offering themselves; but they would be under the greatest Obligation to the DIVINE GOODNESS for any Enjoyment of themselves!---It is impossible for the Blood of Bulls and Goats; or for the Sufferings of any finite Being to take away Sins!---They cannot cancel one Transgression! They cannot make Reparation to GOD's Holiness, for the least Violation of it!---But CHRIST has made full Satisfaction!---HE is the LAMB of GOD, that taketh away the Sins---not of one offending Mortal, but of a whole offending World!-- His Death is a perfect Propitiation, not for one Iniquity---not for
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the unnumbered Iniquities of one Man;---but for the Sins and Iniquities of the whole Race of Mankind!---'Tis sufficient to satisfy for them all, if by a lively Faith they lay hold on it.

Judge then how great that Person must be who could expiate the Guilt of Millions and Millions of Sinners!---Whose propitiating Blood could atone for numberless Offences, and purify a whole World of Offenders!---Behold now the blessed JESUS atoning for Sins:---Atoning for all Manner of Sins and Blasphemies, which Men commit---atoning for the unnumbered Sins of every single Believer---atoning for the more unnumbered Sins of all Believers, in every Age and Generation---both those that preceded, and those that shall come after his Death!---Oh! consider this, and tell me whether this HIGH PRIEST can be a Creature!---Tell me, whether it is possible for HIM to be less than GOD!---Sure that Blood must be divine, which is able to wash away Guilt of all Kinds!---Sure the Merit of those Sufferings must be infinite, which could answer the Demands of infinite Justice!---Sure that Satisfaction must be *more* than infinite, which made as ample Reparation to the uncreated Holiness as if the whole Race of Sinners had been eternally destroyed!

III. The Divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST is evident from his sanctifying our
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depraved Nature!---CHRIST, saith the Apostle, *is made* to his faithful People, *Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.*---Now consider what Sanctification is,---It is not a mere outside Decency of Behavior!---'Tis not a bare external Conformity to the Laws of Religion!---'Tis an inward Purity; such as removes, not varnishes over the corrupt Nature!---'Tis a hearty Love of GOD---an unfeigned Resignation, to his blessed Will!—A cordial Affection for all Mankind for our common Creator's Sake!—This State in Scripture is called a New Creature!—To have this Change wrought in our Minds is stiled being born again!—Now, who is it that can create this new Heart, but the all-powerful GOD?—None but GOD did make Us living Creatures out of the Dust of the Ground!—And none but GOD, can make Us true Saints out of the Corruption of Sin.—Naturally We are dead in Trespases and Sins!—Who then, or what can raise Us unto the Life of Righteousness, and true Holiness?—Nothing, nothing but that divine Power, that divine Voice, which spoke Lazarus from his Tomb, and the Widow's Son from his Bier.

Again, there is no such Thing as Sanctification without the Communications of the Holy Ghost!—'Tis the peculiar Office of that blessed Spirit to sanctify our Souls—nothing but the
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Beams of His Light can expel the Darkneſs;— nothing but his cleaſing Influences can purge away the Filthineſs of our diſordered Souls! But who can impart this great, and glorious Gift but GOD?—Who can ſend the third Perſon in the ever bleſſed Trinity but the ALMIGHTY?—Can any Creature commiſſion the ETERNAL SPIRIT to come down into our Hearts?—Can any Creature give a Charge to the ETERNAL COMFORTER to take Poſſeſſion of our Hearts?—Oh! No!—David, and all holy Men have ſought this Vouchſafement only from GOD!—They knew that as this Spirit proceeded only from GOD, ſo GOD alone could beſtow it —But we find the BLESSED JESUS promiſing to impart it before his Paſſion!—We find HIM fulfilling the wonderful Promiſe after His Aſcention!—And can we doubt whether HE be GOD, or not? HE who diffuſes theſe divine Influences muſt ſurely be divine!—The Apoſtles prayed that the Holy Ghoſt might fall upon their Converts; but CHRIST of his own Power gives Him to whomſoever HE will!—They implored it; but HE diſpenſes it!—They aſked it ſupplicantly;—but HE grants it authoritatively!

We have executed our firſt Deſign, and ſhewed the Divinity of CHRIST,

I. From the Miracles HE wrought.

II. From the Honors which were paid HIM.

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III. From

III. From the Nature of the mediatorial Office.

Let me only add a practical Observation or two, and I have done!—

I. The Divinity of CHRIST may convince Us of the extreme Guilt, and Depravity of fallen Man!—If it should cost thousands of Gold, and unknown Quantities of costly Drugs to restore any One's Health we should immediately say, Oh! how strangely, how inveterately was such a Patient disordered!—And may we not with equal Justice say, oh! how strangely depraved was that Nature, how miserably fallen from GOD,—that should want a MEDIATOR!—Oh! how loathsome, and odious that Soul!—How contrary to infinite Purity, that could not breathe out a Prayer with any Acceptance; without such an INTERCESSOR to recommend it!

Remember this abasing Truth, and be humbled! Thou art not fit to lift up the devoutest Supplication, no, not on thy bended Knees to the Majesty of Heaven, till the EVERLASTING SON, becomes thy bleeding Sacrifice below, and thy interceding Advocate above!—Can we carry this in our Memory, and still be conceited! How deep was the Pollution,—how strong the Stain of our Sins, since nothing but a Bath of Blood

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divine could fetch them out.—Let Us ever remember this, and be covered with inward Shame! —'Tis the strongest Argument for a constant Self-Abasement!—'Tis the most powerful Motive to that Purity of Spirit which the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST inculcates, and which has the Blessing of *seeing GOD* pronounced upon it.

II. The Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, shews Us the infinite immense Love of the *glorious GOD*! —One cannot think of it without Amazement! —We are lost in Admiration to contemplate it! —When we consider our own Meanness, and GOD's inconceivable Greatness: And yet are assured that HE took human Infirmities for our Sakes, that HE cloathed HIMSELF in mortal Clay for our Redemption, even for *ours*, who are no better than poor, polluted, breathing Dust!—'Tis quite astonishing!—Stand in Amaze, Ye Heavens! Be wrapt in Wonder, O Earth!—And be transported with Joy, O ye Sons of Men! GOD, even the infinite GOD, assumed our inferior Nature, and made His humble Abode, in our inferior World!—All this HE submitted to only to reconcile Us to HIMSELF!—Prodigious Truth!—'Tis really too big for our musing Minds!—Words are altogether unable to equal it!—One is ready to ask the Angels to lend Us their celestial Eloquence!—Admiration is the

properest Language to express it in!—"What!—
 "did GOD, the great GOD, the infinite GOD
 "—did HE become a Man—a Servant—a *Sacri-*
 "*fice* for me? For me, who am a Sinner—who
 "am despised by many of my Fellow Mortals—
 "who, when my Eyes are opened cannot but
 "loathe, and abhor myself!—Let me think of
 "it again! For it cannot be admired enough!—
 "Did the GODHEAD, the glorious, and ado-
 "rable GODHEAD dwell in Flesh and Blood
 "for my Sake? Did HE give that sacred Flesh
 "and Blood, to Smart and Infamy, and Torture
 "for my Salvation?—Did GOD thus regard
 "Me in my low, my wicked, my undone Estate?
 "Ravishing Thought! Oh! that I had the Pe-
 "netration of the Cherubim, that I might dive
 "into the Depths, and soar to the Heights of
 "this most mysterious Love! Oh! that I had
 "the Heart of the Seraphim, that I might burn
 "with Love, and glow with Gratitude in some
 "Degree, becoming the infinite Obligation!—
 "Oh! what shall we render to the LORD for
 "these his *stupendous Benefits!*"

Lastly, Let this great Truth, the Divinity of
 JESUS CHRIST, be the general, godly Consolation,
 and Joy of all!—Let not the rich Men glory in
 their Riches, but rather in the unutterable loving
 Kindness of GOD ALMIGHTY towards them!—

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Let this be more pleasing than all your Wealth—that HEAVEN itself should stoop, and be united to Dust;—that the DIVINITY should clothe itself in Your Flesh, and Blood, and all to endow You with the Riches of Grace here, and the Riches of immortal Glory hereafter.

Remember this, O ye poor Men, and rejoice.—Though Ye are sometimes despised, and not thought worthy to be set with the Dogs of the Flock; yet GOD bowed the Heavens, and came down to serve You!—Oh! what a Wonder to see the Lord of Glory, the King of Angels, bleeding for a poor *Lazarus*, that lies at the Door, and begs for Crumbs!—Your wealthy Neighbors, perhaps, might grudge to give a Piece of Gold out of their Purses to relieve You, but GOD, the supreme GOD, gave His SON out of His Bosom to suffer for You!—HE that was coequal with the adorable Father, gave HIMSELF to die for You! Oh! let this exalt your Minds, and cheer your Souls!—Never complain of your low Condition, but rejoice in the immense Humiliation of the ALMIGHTY in Your Behalf!

Let Sinners, penitent, returning Sinners, remember this, and be comforted!—Your Iniquities are many—Your Guilt is heinous;—but your REDEEMER is infinite!—His divine Blood pleads louder for Pardon, than all your Transgressions can cry for Vengeance!—Your Corruptions, it is probable,

probable, are strong;—they are too mighty for You:—but Your REDEEMER is GOD!—Your SAVIOR, is the adorable IMMANUEL!—Thro' HIM You may do great Acts!—Thro' HIM, You may lead Your Captivity Captive, and triumph over those Lusts which have hitherto enslaved You at their Will!—Be of good Cheer, in the LORD your REDEEMER, and be strong in the Power of his Might!

But let persisting Sinners, remember this, and be startled!—Oh! let them look unto the divine JESUS, and see what they are doing! You are running on in these Abominations. You make light of these Violation's of GOD's Law, which cost the INCARNATE DEITY so much Agony and Blood!—If by wicked Lives You crucify the SON of GOD a-fresh! If by Impenitence, and Unbelief, You reject the only Atonement; there's no Shelter for You when GOD's holy Displeasure arises!—Nay, You will find that CHRIST, who is a Tower of Defence to others, will be a consuming Fire to You!—This Stone, if You are not built upon it, in a holy Profession, will grind You to Powder!—CHRIST must be a *Foundation* to support You, in a holy Faith, or else, will be a falling Ruin, to plunge You into Perdition.—

Let the true Believer remember this, and be replenished with abundant Joy! You know, my Beloved, whom You have believed! Your Faith
and

and Trust are in GOD!—If indeed CHRIST was not Almighty, You were yet in your Sins!—His Expiation would be void, and insignificant, and all your bright, everlasting Hopes sunk at once!—But the reviving Doctrine, is as sure as Words can make it! The same Voice, that set fast the Mountains, and upholds the Universe, has founded it,—nor can the Gates of Hell, overthrow it—Come then, let Us boldly make the glorious Venture!—Let us stake, our ALL, our eternal ALL upon it! With a joyful Confidence, let Us embark our Souls, and their immortal Interests on this Bottom!—Be they all lost—let them all perish, if our REDEEMER be not GOD!—We desire no better Security for our Salvation, than the GODHEAD of our SAVIOR.

SERMON.

S E R M O N V.

On REPENTANCE.

Mark VI. 12. *They went out and preached that Men should REPENT.*

THE greatest and most excellent Preachers that ever appeared in the World, were John the Baptist, our blessed SAVIOR, and his twelve Apostles. 'Tis very remarkable, that the first Subject they all discoursed upon, the first Duty they all recommended, was REPENTANCE. This they urg'd not in a Corner, or among the little Circle of their Acquaintance, but throughout all the Land of Judea; in the larger Towns as well as in the smaller Villages; to Persons of each Sex, of every capable Age, and in every Station of Life. Indeed, in all Places, and to all the People. From the former of these Observations we learn the great Necessity of Repentance. From the latter, that it is necessary for every Quality, Rank, and Condition. Both which are so often declar'd in holy Scripture, that there is no one

who calls himself a Christian, but readily acknowledges it to be a most obligatory Duty.

But the Misfortune is, People are apt to mistake its Nature; and to content themselves with the Shadow instead of the Substance of Repentance. If they sometimes examine themselves, and feel a slight Sorrow for their Sins; if they are conscious that they have made Confession, and asked Pardon of the LORD; they presently imagine themselves to have done all that is required. But this Notion is a Delusion of the Devil's, and these Men deceive themselves. And if they rest satisfied with this mean Attainment, their very Repentance is to be reckoned among their Offences. Yea, their very Repentance must be repented of, else that which they fondly fancy their Security, will betray them to utter Ruin.

To prevent therefore this fatal Error; and that We may not fall into any Mis-apprehensions in a Matter of such Moment, I shall endeavour to explain the true Nature of saving Repentance. And shew You what that was which the Apostles taught, when *They went out, and preached that Men should repent.* This, I think, may be comprehended under the four following Particulars,

- I. Conviction, or a Sense of Sin.
- II. Contrition, or a Sorrow for Sin.
- III. A Renunciation, or an entire forsaking of all Sin.

IV.

IV. A constant, unremitted Endeavour to fulfill all Righteousness.

Of each of these I shall discourse in their Order. And humbly beg of all my Hearers, to listen with a Concern and Attention proportionable to the Importance of the Subject. Remembring that the Judge of Quick and Dead has solemnly declared, That except ye Repent, Ye shall All likewise perish.

I. Conviction, i. e. a clear Sight, or a feeling Sense of our Sinfulness. Without this it is impossible to repent aright. Whoever fancies himself to be righteous, as did the spiritually proud Pharisee, he is as far from being a Penitent, as the Joy of a Festival, is from the Lamentation of a Funeral. The first Step to be taken by the Sinner is to see his Sinfulness, and the Punishment due unto it: In order to this, he sadly reflects upon his original Guilt. The Corruption he brought with him from the Womb. He remembers the Declaration of the Psalmist*, *That he was born in Sin, and in Iniquity did his Mother conceive him.* He knows the sure Truth of this by woeful Experience. For what else has his whole Life been, but a continual Proof thereof? *His Blindness to perceive, and his Backwardness to pursue Good: His Inclination to,*

* Ps. li. 5.

and

and unhappy Relish of, that which is Evil: And all this felt from *his* Childhood, make it evident, that *he* was a Rebel against GOD, from the first Breath *he* drew. That this spiritual Treason against the King of Kings was hereditary, and ran in *his* Blood. Man was created in Righteousness and true Holiness. But where or how has this appeared in Him? When, at what Period of his Life did this Image of the living GOD shine forth in his Soul?—In no part of his Life this, but throughout the whole the contrary was manifest.—*He* sees that this alone is enough to separate *him* from the Favor of GOD; and that for this Cause the Anger of the LORD abideth upon the Sons of Men.

But this is not all: No more than a very little Degree of *his* Misery. If the unavoidable Depravity of *his* Nature renders *him* a Child of Wrath; the wilfull Disobedience of *his* Practice renders him tenfold more so. *He* has neglected what GOD commands, and done what GOD forbids. Yea, many times *his* Prayers and Instances of Obedience, have, thro' the unworthy Manner of their Performance, been abominable. *He* has sinn'd by impure Thoughts, vile and carnal Affections, wicked Words, and ungodly Deeds. *He* ought to have preserv'd a Purity of Heart, of Desire, of Inclination. But alas! *he* has not so much as maintained an outward Righteousness of Conversation.

Conversation. *He* ought to have paid an uniform Obedience to the whole Will of the LORD. But instead of that *he* has swerv'd in almost every Particular of *his* Duty. Nor have these Transgressions been owing to Ignorance, but to a contemptuous Disregard of the divine Will; to a Love of Pleasure and of the World, prevailing above the Love of GOD. Neither have they been single Acts, or sudden Slips, but repeated, deliberate, continued in. 'Tis likely they have been committed against several solemn Resolutions, and Vows of Amendment. 'Tis certain they have been committed against the Judgment of *his* own Mind; against the Admonitions of Conscience; in spite of the many Chastisements inflicted on *Him*, the many Mercies vouchsafed to *Him*, and all the various Methods taken by Providence to reclaim *Him*.

These, with their horrible Aggravations, *numerous and formidable as an Army with Banners*, the repenting Sinner descrys set in Array against himself. *And Oh! what Harm have they done him? With what Mischief do they threaten him?* They have already disordered and defil'd his Soul, so as nothing but the precious Blood of CHRIST can cleanse it; nothing but his holy Spirit can rectify it. They have enslav'd it to the Devil; subjected it both to his Dominion, and his Likeness, so as nothing but Almighty Grace can rescue or restore

it. If he has not Vexation in his Heart, Pain in his Limbs; ill Success in his Undertakings; Destruction and Unhappiness in all his Ways, it is entirely owing to the undeserved Goodness, and unwearied long-suffering of GOD. He has deserved these, and Visitations a thousand Times severer. He has deserved to be rejected by the LORD, to be forsaken by his holy Spirit; to have his Name blotted out of the Book of Life. A hardened Heart, a reprobate Mind, a seared Conscience (the most fearful Calamities in the World) are the due Desert of his Deeds. Nay, GOD wou'd do him no wrong, if he should totally abandon him to his own Lusts; and give him over to the Devil, to be led Captive by him at his Will.

This is the Portion of the Sinner from GOD in this Life. And if he extends his Views into that eternal one, that will quickly begin; O! what Scenes of Horror, what Floods of fiery Vengeance wait to receive him! Heaven is forfeited by his Iniquity, and the Fulness of Joy lost. The wretched Man cut off from the blessed Society of Saints and Angels, and banished from the Light of GOD's Countenance. A most sad and deplorable Loss this! But O that Completion of Woe, that Consummation of Misery, which is making ready for him in the bottomless Pit! How can we think of it with-

but Trembling and Astonishment? There, the Worm never dies. The Fire is never quenched. There, the accursed Criminals lie in the Hell like Sheep. Death, the second Death, eternal Death gnaweth upon them. There, the fierce Anger of the LORD is sharpened for a Sword, to execute Vengeance insupportable and everlasting. Such, and so perillous is the Condition of the Ungodly. If he look backward, he finds himself a heinous Transgressor. If he look inward, he finds himself grievously corrupt. If he look forward, he discerns the all-powerful GOD making ready for him the Instruments of Death.'

Now it is the Beginning of Repentance, to be made sensible that this is our own Case, *and that the Picture which has been drawing exactly resembles us.* That we have been such heinous Transgressors, that we are thus grievously corrupt, and that the never-ending Torments are our proper Wages. Are you startled, surpriz'd, or terrified at this? Why then there is Hope. Not that You will be safe if You continue as You are. But there is Hope, that the LORD is going to work a good Work on your Souls. Do not obstruct his Operation, nor defeat his Design. Cherish the dark Thoughts a while, and at length Light will spring up. Ruminat on your miserable State; and that will dispose You to

‘ an effectual Discharge of the remaining Branches
 ‘ of true Repentance.

‘ But if there be any among You, that do not
 ‘ perceive me to have been speaking of them.
 ‘ Or if they do perceive that I have had them in
 ‘ View, but imagine me to have mistaken my
 ‘ Men. These Persons are, of all others, the
 ‘ most hopeless and incurable. They are not
 ‘ only sunk deep in the aforementioned Sin and
 ‘ Misery; but have an insensible and destructive
 ‘ Ignorance added to all the rest. They are mor-
 ‘ tally wounded, and think themselves whole:
 ‘ Sick unto Death, and imagine themselves well.
 ‘ All that I can do for such Persons is, to lift up
 ‘ my Voice in Supplication for them, as the Pro-
 ‘ phet did for his Servant, “LORD, I pray
 ‘ Thee, open their Eyes that they may see.”

But for You, who are convinc’d, that Ye are
 indeed Sinners; and so, subject to the Wrath of
 GOD; let me lead You on to that acceptable
 Repentance, which will reinstate You in his Fa-
 vor, and by that Means in all desirable Happiness.

After we see our Sin, the odious and abomi-
 nable Nature; the bitter and pernicious Fruits of
 it, then there follows a Sorrow for it. After
 Conviction cometh

II. Contrition. Which is a second Ingredient
 of true Repentance. No wonder the Sinner was
 unconcerned

unconcerned and obdurate, so long as his Eyes were Blind. But when they are opened, and GOD'S SPIRIT shines into the Conscience, *as that amazing midnight Light shone into the Apostle's Prison**. Then 'tis a Wonder, if he can refrain from Emotions of Grief. Observe *David*, observe *St. Peter*, observe *Mary Magdalene*; one of them weeps bitterly, another waters his Couch, another washes her SAVIOR'S Feet with Tears!

Sin is likened to a sore Burthen, too heavy, for the Mind that feels its Pressure, to bear. Therefore the Heart being unable to support it; *it bursts open the Flood-Gates of Weeping, and sets the Eyes afloat in Tears*. The Remembrance of Wickedness, set home by divine Grace, is bitter; and the Burthen of it, well nigh intolerable. The Things, from which the Offender expected Pleasure, give him the sharpest Pain, and his Merri-ment is turned into Mourning. When a young Profligate has consum'd a large and plenteous Fortune in riotous Living; when by his lewd Courses he has fill'd his Body with noisome Diseases; and by extravagant Courses has reduc'd himself to a Morsel of Bread. O! with what cutting Regret does he look back upon his unaccountable Foolishness? What sharp Indignation and Anguish afflict his Soul? How does he accuse, condemn, and express all possible Resentment against himself? Much in the same Manner does

* Acts xii. 7.

the enlightened Sinner behave. Inasmuch as he has been full as unmerciful to his better, his immortal Part, as the debauched Spendthrift has to his bodily Health, and worldly Interest.

He grieves for the Evils spiritual and temporal he has brought upon himself, and for that everlasting Shame and Confusion he has exposed himself to. And tho' the Penitent sorrows greatly from a Sense of present Wretchedness, and a Prospect of future Ruin: yet this is not the whole of his Trouble. *'Streams of melting Concern flow in from other Quarters, till they make a full Tide in his contrite Soul.'* If he look'd for no after reckoning, yet he would grieve for having offended, in a most despiteful Manner, his best and greatest FRIEND. When any one possess'd with a Frenzy, or intoxicated with Liquor; has abus'd, insulted, and outrageously treated a Person of Worth and Honor; a Person too, that always serv'd the Injurer to the utmost of his Power. How does such a one blame and reproach himself at the Return of his Reason? So, and much more does the poor Sinner blame and reproach himself, when he awakes to Repentance. GOD has preserved him, protected him, and loaded him with Benefits ever since he was born.—And he has repaid this ceaseless Love with stubbornness and Rebellion. The Sinner's Provocations have been more than enough to weary out the meekest Man, or the most

most patient Angel.—Yet the glorious Majesty of Heaven has spared him. Spared him Day after Day, Year after Year with incomparable Long-suffering. But what Reward has he given to the LORD, for all his Forbearance and Gentleness? Why, he obstinately persisted in his Disobedience. Nay; the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, has become as it were a Suppliant unto him. He has, by his written Word, by the Mouth of his Ministers,—beseech'd him to be reconciled. GOD has assured him, that he delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner; and therefore has importuned him to turn and live.—But he has slighted and set at nought the divine Counsels, *as much as if they came from one of the Fools in Israel.* O! the Baseness, O! the Ingratitude of this Behaviour. The Consideration thereof pierces his Soul as it were a Sword,

The Sinner grieves for the Afflictions of Jesus: occasioned by his Naughtiness, and suffered for *his* Sake. He reads in Scripture, that his blessed Saviour was scourged, covered with Sweat, bath'd in Blood purely on his Account. To make Attonement for him, the EVERLASTING SON was delivered into the Hands of blood-thirsty Men. For his Iniquities, as saith the Prophet Isaiah, the Prince of Peace was bruised, and wounded for his Transgressions. His Ungodliness pointed the Nails, gave Sharpness to the Thorns, and brought

down the dear REDEEMER with Shame and Anguish to the Grave. — For these Things he weeps; or if his Eyes be dry, his Heart is in Bitterness.

He laments also that he has so often grieved the BLESSED SPIRIT, who wou'd have sanctified and sealed him to the Day of Redemption. Those heavenly Inspirations which make Men meek, and lowly, and wise unto Salvation, he has again and again rejected. Many Kings and righteous Persons wou'd have rejoiced to receive the HOLY GHOST the Comforter: but he has done despite to his Love, and spurn'd his saving Influences. The Spirit of the LORD waited long to convert and renew him, and wou'd fain have imparted his blessed Self, and the Riches of his Grace unto him. But the Sinner vilely cast away these precious Offers, as tho' they had been more despicable, than the Clay in the Streets. — Tho' the Giver was GOD, and the Gift divine, yet he undervalued the one and cared not for the other.

Thus disrespectfully has he treated all the Persons in the most adorable Trinity. And when this comes clear and plain into his Memory, how can he but choose but bemoan himself? How can he choose but smite upon his Breast, and cry out, "My Foolishness and Ingratitude! my Foolishness and Ingratitude! I have trampled upon the Commands of GOD the Father, and turned his Grace into Wantonness. I have

“ crucified, and been the Death of GOD the
“ Son. I have dis-esteem’d, and done the utmost
“ Indignity to GOD the Holy Ghost. And
“ (O! wonderful Goodness!) they still retain a
“ Favour for me. They still follow me with
“ loving Kindness and Mercy. O! that my
“ Head were Waters, and my Eyes a Fountain
“ of Tears; that I might weep for having so
“ scandalously abused the tender Compassions of
“ my GOD. My much injur’d, but yet ALL-
“ forgiving GOD.”

Thus is the sincere Penitent affected. His Heart is humbled. His Spirit is contrite. He is full of Compunction and godly Remorse. He laments and bewails, not only because he has deserved to be eternally tormented with Devils; but chiefly and most of all, because he has sinn’d against the Bowels of infinite and everlasting Love.

Not that he is always sorrowful, like a mourning Dove that never changeth his Note. No: he afflicts his Soul in private. His Eyes run down in secret Places. When he comes abroad into the World he takes his Savior’s Advice, and anoints his Head, and puts on an innocent Cheerfulness. Neither is he disconsolate in his Sorrow. No: he believes that his REDEEMER has made an Attonement for his Sin, and that the gracious GOD, thro’ JESUS CHRIST has blotted out his Transgressions.

Transgressions. But yet he is glad when he can grieve. 'Tis an Easement and Satisfaction, to testify his unfeigned Repentance for having displeased so good a GOD, so great a Benefactor, so indulgent a Father. We see then Conviction is the first; Contrition is the second Part of Repentance. And from these ariseth a third, which is

III. A Renuntiation, or thorough forsaking of all Sin. The relenting Sinner, not only grieves for that he is convinc'd of, but forsakes that which he grieves for. Here we shall find a notable Difference between the hearty and the hypocritical Penitent. Saul wept, Ahab chastened himself with Fasting, and poor Felix trembled: but none of them left off their vitious Courses. Whereas, when the Spirit of Sanctification enters into the Heart, it disposeth him to loath, and abominate Sin. The Committer judges it to be the worst of Evils, and is as careful to avoid it, as is the Mariner to steer clear of the Rocks on which he was lately shipwreck'd. It is most destructive, and therefore most offensive to him. He conceives an Abhorrence, and takes up a settled Resolution against every evil Way. The Language of his Soul, and the firm Purpose of his Mind, is, "*If Balak wou'd give me his House full of Silver and Gold, I will not again transgress the Word of the LORD.*"

“**LORD**”. You may as soon persuade him to pluck out a right Eye, or cut off a right Hand, as willingly to do amiss. He had rather be visited with any Affliction, than that Sin shou’d again have Dominion over Him.

Nor does he break off from a few unlawful Indulgencies; and make a Reserve of some darling Corruption. No: his Reformation is universal and uniform. Such as will not only lop off the Branches, but root up the whole Body of Sin. For the same Reason that he renounces one, he will renounce every unrighteous Practice; and not spare the once most beloved Lust. *The least, or most favourite Iniquity is hateful to GOD, was painful to Christ, is grievous to the Holy Ghost. Therefore he bids a long, a lasting Adieu to it, saying as Moses to Pharaoh, “Henceforth I will entertain Thee again no more for ever.”*

Satan may suggest, it is a little one, and so not to be minded: or a secret one, and so in no danger of being discovered. But however persuasive these Allurements were formerly, they have now lost their Force. Tho’ the Practice of Wickedness shou’d be a profitable Service, and like the Damself possess’d with a Spirit of Divination, shou’d bring the Practitioners much Gain, yet it is an Abomination unto him. No Consideration of Pleasure, of Interest, or Credit can reconcile him to any Thing sinful. No: tho’ the whole
World

World shou'd countenance and concur in Customs that are not good ; He wou'd stand out, and hold fast his Integrity tho' at the Expence of being singular,

All this he will desire, and all this he will be enabled to perform ; not thro' his own Strength, or resolute Conduct, but thro' the Help which cometh from above. For 'tis his earnest incessant Prayer to GOD, to be delivered from the *Power*, as well as to be preserv'd from the *Punishment* of Sin.

We have taken Notice of three Parts of genuine, sincere Repentance, viz. Conviction of Sin, Contrition for Sin, and a thorough Forsaking of it. The last, and crowning Requisite ; that which gives Perfection and Glory to the whole, is

IV. A constant unremitted Endeavour to fulfill all Righteousness. And this is that which we engag'd in the fourth Place to consider. 'Tis something to abandon our ungodly Courses. But this is not enough for the Penitent, nor for the Christian. He must also follow after Holiness. Unless we press towards this Mark, all the foregoing Attainments will profit us nothing. Nay, they will vanish and melt away as a thin Mist before the rising Sun. Our Remorse and Sorrow will not, cannot remain with us, unless they quicken us to a holy and growing Zeal. Therefore

fore the Penitent not only relinquishes the Things that are behind, but reaches out unto those Things that are before. He will abound in every good Word and Work, and strive to adorn his Soul with all heavenly Virtues; and to be quite the reverse of what he lately was. 'If he has 'aforetime been a Glutton or a Drunkard, he 'will henceforward observe a strict and daily 'Temperance. If he has been sordid and uncharitable, he will put his Heart upon devising 'liberal Things. If he has been a slothful and 'unprofitable Servant, he will bestir himself, and 'become industrious in his holy Vocation.' If he has been puff'd up with Pride, addicted to Slander, envenom'd with Envy; He will set himself vigorously against these Evils, to subdue them; and seek diligently after the opposite Qualities to obtain them. For the Time past he has bore the Image of the Evil One. For the Time to come he will give himself no Rest, till he enjoys some Participation of the divine Nature. 'Till he finds himself making continual Advances to a fuller and more complete Possession of it.

O! glorious and blessed Change! Not long ago the unhappy Creature was the Slave of Satan; but now he is become a Child of GOD, a Co-Heir with CHRIST, a Brother to the Saints. Not long ago he was a Sink of Sin, and his Heart a Cage of unclean Birds. But *now he is washed,*

now

now he is cleansed, now he is sanctified. The Holy Ghost dwelleth in him, and replenishes his Soul with Meekness and Peace, with Purity and Piety; with Faith and Love. He delights in the Lord; he rejoices to worship his GOD in Sincerity; to hear his most holy Word; to set forth his most worthy Praise; to do his most blessed Will. Henceforth his Hope, his Treasure, his Conversation is in Heaven. He thinks and speaks; he acts and lives, like one that is indeed begotten again to an Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. 'In a Word; if You observe his outward Carriage and Behavior; or consider his inward Temper and Frame of Mind, he is become a new Man. His Desires are new, his Fears are new, his Aims are new. His Judgment, his Choice, his Affections, his whole Nature is new.' All this is wrought in him by the Power of divine Grace, for the Sake of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and make up that Repentance which is sincere and evangelical, which is a Repentance unto Life and Salvation.

Thus have we conducted the Sinner, *as the Almighty did the Israelites, from the Smoke and Brick-Kilns of Egypt, i. e. from the base Bondage of Sin, and the cruel Tyranny of Corruption.* And if he does but walk on in those peaceful Paths, they will restore him to the glorious Liberty of the Sons of GOD, and lead him at the last to the heavenly

heavenly Canaan ; that happy Haven, and that blissful State, where we all would be. There this enlightened, relenting, returning and reformed Prodigal, will be received by his compassionate Father into Joy and everlasting Felicity. Not his own Deserts, but for his SAVIOR's Merits; not for the Works of Righteousness which he has done; but for the LORD JESUS CHRIST's Sake, who when he had overcome the Sharpness of Death did open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believing, and repenting Sinners.

S E R M O N

S E R M O N VI.

John V. 39.

Ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς.

Search the Scriptures.

THE Words need no Explanation.—They are a very positive Command of a very plain Duty.—Which of us have hitherto been obedient to this heavenly voice—I am not able to tell—He knows who setteth at his Father's right Hand, beholding and considering all our Ways.—However it is my unfeigned Wish that we *all* may obey for the Future, that those who have accustomed themselves to this useful Search, may persevere, and abound more and more.—That those who are strangers to these sacred Writings may contract an happy Acquaintance with them, and from this Time forward begin to search them, nor ever leave off till they have found eternal Life!

That I may do somewhat weakly—tho' sincerely towards engaging you all to this profitable Practice, give me Leave

I. To lay before you the Obligations we are under to search the Scriptures.

II. The great and excellent Advantages we may reap from searching the Scriptures.

III. Conclude with a short Exhortation.

I. To lay down some Obligations we are under to search the Scriptures.

1st. *The Scripture is the Word of God*, which is no inconsiderable Obligation!—GOD speaks to us, *as much* in the Scriptures, as He did to Adam in the Garden.—And when so great a Majesty speaks, what unpardonable Rudeness, is it *not* to give Attention? The Bible is a Letter sent down from Heaven, indited by the Holy Spirit, and delivered to us by some of the choicest Servants of the ALMIGHTY.—Now when such a Message comes from so great a BEING, and in so solemn a Manner;—to take none or but little Notice, will be a Contempt of the ADORABLE SENDER.—We all hope to be heard when we cry unto the Lord, and pour out our Complaints before HIM, and is it not highly reasonable that we should give HIM a careful Hearing, when HE shews us by HIS Prophets what is his holy Will? Yes!—It is not only reasonable but absolutely necessary, for thus saith the inspired Preacher—“*He that turneth away his Ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayer shall be an Abomination.*” Prov. xxviii. 9. From which we learn that GOD will have as

F

little

64. *SEARCH the SCRIPTURES.*

little Regard to our Supplications, as we have to His Commandments.—If we have a dislike, or no Relish, and Love for the Scriptures, their ALMIGHTY AUTHOR, will have a loathing to, and abominate our Devotions! And what can be more fearful than this! What more solicitously to be avoided?—To have our Prayers abominable!—'Tis the Misery of Miseries, the last step towards Hell, and only not to be in it.

2dly. *We are commanded by GOD to study the Scriptures*, and this is another most binding Obligation.

GOD who loves us, and knows what is good for us, has in this as in all other Things made our Interest, and our Duty one and the same.—'Thus saith the Lord himself.—Josh. i. 8. *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy Mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon Day and Night.* So our blessed SAVIOR in the Text does not advise it as beneficial to us, or desire it as a Favour to him, but with a solemn Authority charges us to search the Scriptures.—The Jews were commanded to bind their Law (burdensome, and expensive as it was) upon their Arms for Bracelets, between their Eyes for Frontlets;—And are Christians to be less attentive to the more excellent, easier, and purer Precepts of the Gospel? In no wise!—If the Israelites sinned by forgetting the Statutes, and Judgments of Moses the Servant, how much more

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more shall WE offend, if we disregard the Law of the only begotten Son of GOD, of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and our GOD?—We should look upon it as our bounden Duty, to read, or hear, and meditate on our Bibles every Day!

As we must endeavour to mortify Pride, and Passion daily, because these Tempers are forbidden by GOD, *so* with the same Care, and for the same Reason ought we to exercise ourselves in the Holy Scriptures daily, because this Employ is enjoined by GOD.—He therefore, that can let a Day pass without a Portion of Scripture, not only slights the Majesty, but disobey the Command of that GREAT GOD, whose they are, and who has commanded all Men every where to search them.

3dly. Another Obligation upon us to search the Scriptures, is,—*That they are the Rule by which we are to walk here and to be judged hereafter.*—By these we are to order our Conversation in this World, and by these we are to stand, or fall eternally in the next World.

Would you know who is an upright Man, and approved of GOD?—It is HE that squares his Actions, and models his Tempers according to this Rule.

Would you know who are those happy few, that at the Consummation of all Things, will be bidden to enter into the Joy of their Lord? None

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but they who have regulated their Behaviour, and fashioned their Dispositions according to this Standard.—*When the Dead both small and great shall stand before GOD, they shall be judged* (St. John tells us) *out of those Things which are written in the Books, i. e. the Actions of their Lives which are noted down in GOD's Register-Book in Heaven will be compared with the Directions given us in his Revelation-Book on Earth, and as they are found to agree, or differ, the decisive Sentence will run!*—Not a Soul of us will be acquitted in that terrible Trial, unless he has learnt to know, and laboured to keep the Commandments of Scripture.

As therefore the Scriptures are the Word of GOD—As HE HIMSELF has charged us to study them—As they are the Rule by which our Conduct is to be guided now, and by which it is finally to be tried.—We are under a threefold Obligation of Respect—Duty, and self Preservation, to search them.—On so many Accounts it is strictly required of us; and on as many it is greatly advantageous to us—which brings me to the

IId. Head.—*The Advantages we may reap from a due, and diligent search of the Scriptures.*

Ist. The first I shall mention is,—*That we may hereby learn what we must do to be saved.*

That

That great, and important Secret which was hid from Ages and Generations—is revealed here. Though it has ever been beyond the Reach of the most penetrating Ages, yet in this blessed Book it is clearly disclosed, so that unlearned, and in other Respects, ignorant Men may understand it.

How valuable is our Bible for this one, if it had no other recommending Quality, in that it shews us the Way of Salvation! We have heard with our Ears, our Fathers have told us, of another, and that of a never ending World coming on. That in this wonderful HREEAFTER there is such a Happiness attainable, that is too large for the Heart of Man to conceive.—A Happiness that is but dimly described by—*Crowns of everlasting Glory—a Paradise of everlasting Bliss—A Fulness of everlasting Love.*—That in this desirable State there is no more Pain, no more Sorrow, no more Death—nothing but pure and unmixed Joy without Measure, without Number, without End.—But the Way to all this Blessedness is narrow, and not much trodden.—There is but one Gate, and that a strait one, which opens into this glorious Scene.—So that if left to conduct ourselves, there is too much Danger of missing the Road, and falling aside into the Paths of Destruction—Methinks in such a Case some friendly Hand to bring us *directly*, and *surely* thither should

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be greatly welcome.—Now this the Scripture is.—It makes the Way plain before our Face.—'Tis marked out in the Scripture with GOD's own Finger, so that any one who is not wilfully blind, may walk therein.—Here we find what Qualifications we must possess before we can be meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. What manner of Spirit is the necessary, the only Passport into those peaceful Mansions.—Here all Orders, and Degrees of Men are instructed in the Duties peculiar to their respective Stations, and the grand Mystery of Godliness is discovered!

O blessed Book! our better, our spiritual Sun that sheddest thy bright Beam upon our Souls, and furnishest us with the Light of Life.---Thou sovereign Antidote against the Delusions of the Devil, the Treachery of our fallen Nature,—and the Darkness of the World!---Thou Guide to lead us safely from the Mazes of this miserable Life unto our heavenly, and everlasting Rest.—No wonder that David counted his Kingdom as nothing, and called THEE his Heritage, and Portion for ever! No Wonder the holy Martyrs parted with their Estates, their Families, their Blood, rather than with thee.—'Tis rather to be wondered at, that all Mankind do not prize thee as their richest Jewel—converse with thee as their sweetest Companion, and talk of thee as the dearest Object of their Love all the Day long.—'Tis

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with Regret I leave off from speaking of thy unspeakable Worth,---but though I leave off from one Part of thy Excellency, 'tis only to begin upon another.

2ndly. A second Advantage of searching the Scriptures is—*That it will not only give us Knowledge to Discern, but Strength to perform our Duty.*

The former, without this latter Advantage would have been imperfect, but both put together they compose the most valuable Blessing on this side Heaven.---When we have learnt the Will of the Lord, then to be enabled to perform it, makes us at present only a little lower than the Angels and will make us e'er long, *as the Angels of GOD!*—Now the Scripture is endowed with this strengthening, and animating Power!—I appeal to any one of the least Experience in spiritual Things, whether he has not felt the Truth of this Assertion, when he has been reading in, or musing upon the divine Word.—Has not the Fire of holy Zeal kindled in his Heart?---When he has been halting in his Obedience, and ready to go over to the Tents of Ungodliness, have not these encouraging Pages re-established his Resolutions, and attached Him more inseparably to his CRUCIFIED MASTER! When our Hands have hung down, and our Knees grown feeble in our holy Warfare, has not a Chapter, and sometimes a single Verse called up our Courage as a Trumpet,
and

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and inspired the Soldier of Christ with new recruited Vigour? Neither is this to be wondered at, since GOD Almighty who worketh *what*, and how HE pleaseth, hath promised as much. Thus He assures us by David, that whoso exercises Himself in his Law, Day, and Night, shall thrive, and flourish, as a Tree planted by the Water Side! That his Prosperity shall not be a fading withering Prosperity, but lasting as the Verdure and Beauty of an evergreen, *his Leaf shall not fall.*

Reading is one of those Practices that St. Paul informs *Timothy* will make his profiting as a private Christian, appear unto all, and render his Preaching as a Minister of the Gospel successful, to the Salvation of those that heard Him.—Indeed, nothing was ever so admirably calculated to give Weight and Energy to our dull Desires of Holiness as the Scriptures—There are such Promises from one End to the other—such precious Promises to set on Fire all our Hopes; such Threatenings beyond all Imagination dreadful to alarm our Fears;—such amiable Patterns to provoke our Imitation, that if Terrors can fright us, or Rewards allure us, or the most illustrious Examples can make us in Love with Piety—Then the Bible is above all other Books fitted to promote

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mote those glorious Ends; inasmuch as it abounds with Plenty of these forcible Motives.

3dly. *The Scriptures are serviceable to every excellent and holy Purpose.*

All the Misery that the Spirit of fallen Man is liable to, the Scripture is able to redress.—All the Perfection that the Spirit of redeemed Man is capable of, the Scripture is able to impart.—It is a rich Treasury of all that Wisdom, Happiness, and Glory, which in our present Condition we can attain, or need desire.

Are we yet in our Sins, with our carnal Affections unsubdued?—Let us put ourselves under the Discipline of this heavenly Word.—'Tis quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, it can give a killing deadly Blow to the whole Body of Sin within us.—It is likened to a Hammer that breaketh the obdurate Heart, that Rock in the Breast, in Pieces, making it contrite for past Offences—tenderly conscientious for future Failings—and reducing it entirely to the Obedience of CHRIST.—If we are converted, but weak in the Faith, it will nourish our infant Piety, and lead it on to maturity.—It is called the sincere Milk of the Word, and the Bread of Life, and so is proper Food for the young Proficient, as well as for those of larger Attainments. The Babes in Christ may suck at this Breast, and
grow

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grow thereby!—The strong Men may eat of this spiritual Meat, and renew their Strength!

Are we in Sorrow of Spirit, or Heaviness of Heart? This is our Comfort, says David, in his Affliction—The Scriptures are Wells of Consolation, as well as Wells of Salvation, and we may draw from them the Water of Joy, in such abundance as will drown all our Troubles.

Are we in Doubt what Judgment to pass, or how to act in any emergency? The Scriptures are hung out by the Lord himself on purpose to be a Light unto our Feet, and a Lantern unto our Path!—In short, in this Store-House of precious Things there is Medicine for every Sickness, Balm for every Wound, a Supply for every Want.—It is plentifully stocked with all that can be cheering to us in our Pilgrimage, ornamental, or perfective of our Nature, whatever can tend to make us Sons of Gladness, Sons of Glory, and not unbecoming Sons of GOD, is here.

Do not think me extravagant in the Praises of Scripture, and that I attribute imaginary Excellencies to it—Only remember its all-wise, and ever-blessed Author, and you will acknowledge that the Half of its Worth has not been told. From GOD this inestimable Gift came!—By GOD these Treasures of eternal Truths were collected, and as we can never pay too deep a Re-
verence

verence to the Honour of his Majesty, so neither can we entertain too great a Value, for the Words of his Mouth, the Dictates of infinite Wisdom ! To say of a Book it is GOD's own handy Work is to say more in a few Syllables, than many Volumes can fully set forth.

III. May I not now by Way of Exhortation, use the Apostle's Manner of arguing ?

My beloved Brethren, Believe ye the Scriptures, and the excellent Things that have been spoken of them ?

If you do not, I can only pity you—pray for you—and wish mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears to bewail your Blindness.

If you do believe—one would think there is no Need of Arguments to persuade you to search them, but rather of helping you to express, and vent your Thankfulness for having them to search.—Nevertheless I entreat and beseech you in the Name of GOD, to study this blessed Book---Yet not I, so much as your own Interest, Your present, and future, your temporal and eternal Welfare.---These call upon you, these solicit you more prevalently than any Reasonings of mine.--Search them then with as much Assiduity, and Diligence,---with as much Accuracy and
Exactness,

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Exactness, as they that dig in the Mines search the Veins of Silver, the Beds of Gold, or the Places of Sapphires---Job xxviii. 16. Let that Day be reckoned as lost in which some Portion is not carefully read,---that Hour in which some Portion is not meditated upon, and digested!

Let not the Rich Man rejoice in his Riches, but in the Leisure they afford him, for this pleasing and profitable Employ.

Let not the poor Man be discontented with his Poverty, but rejoice that his low Estate does not debar him from these Treasures of heavenly Wisdom.

And O let us all both Rich and Poor, improve the spare Time, which our necessary Business indulges us with, in this most useful Manner.---Let us devote these valuable Minutes to this holy Exercise, and they will prove some of the brightest, and most gainful Parts of our Lives---In a Word, since this Practice is enjoined you by the great GOD, and conduces so much to your Pleasure, Perfection in Holiness, and everlasting Profit, Let me once again beseech you to give Attention to it, not only sometimes on a Sunday, or when you happen to be in a serious Mood, but when ever you have Opportunity.

Grant me, nay, grant unto GOD, grant unto yourselves, this one Request, and we need, perhaps, desire no more. He can scarce be ignorant

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who seeks to this Fountain of Knowledge.---He can scarcely continue dead in Trespasses and Sins, who resorts to these quickning, lively Oracles---'Tis indeed *possible*, but 'tis hardly *probable* that He should go on to disregard his Duty, who listens daily to this encouraging, threatening, commanding Voice of the Lord GOD, than which nothing can be more powerful, and awakening, unless it be the Voice of the Archangel, and that Trump of GOD, which our Dust and mouldering Bones will hear, and at the Sound of which, all that are in the Graves, will come forth, they that have done good, and have kept the Sayings of the Prophecy of this Book---Rev. xxii. 7. to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have neglected to search them, and refused to obey them, to the Resurrection of Damnation.

SERMON

 S E R M O N VII.

PSALM XVIII. 1.

I will love thee, O LORD, my Strength.

THE Love of GOD, is the first, and great Commandment of the Law, as our SAVIOR himself testifies!—'Tis the single Scope, and Aim of the first Table to produce it in our Hearts, as we learn from St. Paul's Declaration, *The End of the Commandment is Charity*.—'Tis also more acceptable to GOD than the most costly Oblation.—*To love the Lord, thy GOD, is better much than all whole Burnt Offerings**, is the Voice of Scripture.—If therefore we would fulfill the Commandment;—answer the End of the Law, or be acceptable to the blessed GOD, it behoves Us to make the Profession of the Royal Psalmist!

But this Temper we must all acknowledge is not natural to us;—it is not born with us—not wrought into our natural Constitution.—No!—'Tis a glorious Plant of a heavenly growth,

* Mark xii. 32.

that

that of itself will never rise, nor flourish in the Soil of our corrupt Hearts.—It may therefore be of great Use to consider after what Manner we may make it our own.—How we may all possess this heavenly Virtue—How we may every one be able to say with holy David, *I will love thee, O Lord, my Strength!*—

In pursuance of this Design, I shall

I. Shew by what Means we may obtain this Love of GOD.

II. Shall lay down some Marks whereby we may discover whether we have it, or whether we want it!

III. Shall propose some Motives, that may invite Us all to endeavour after it!—

I. I am to shew by what Means we may obtain this Love of GOD.

In order to obtain the Love of GOD,

1st. *Let us consider every Blessing as coming from GOD.*—Look upon Him as the Author, and Giver of all good Things.—*All my fresh Springs are in thee,* says the devout Psalmist.—Ps. lxxxvii. 8.—There's not the least Good, but has GOD for its Author!—Not one single Drop among all the abundant Showers of Mercy, but descends from above! If we trace these sweet Currents to their
Head,

Head, we shall find *GOD*, the gracious and bountiful *GOD* is their Original.—When we have seen the Vallies stand thick with Corn;—when we have been blessed with seasonable Weather;—when we have been delivered from impending Dangers; let us with Attention consider that this comfortable Meal, this refreshing Sleep, this Deliverance from Danger, this Support under Trouble, this Recovery from Sickness—indeed this immense Catalogue of Blessings, which takes its Date from the first Moment of our Being, and has run parallel with our Lives; I say, all these various, and unnumbered Instances of Goodness daily, hourly, experienced, are the Issues of *GOD*'s unmerited Love!—Let us then endeavour to trace the loving Kindness of the Lord in all our Mercies!—Let these Streams lead up our Affections to the great Fountain Head!—These are the Overflowings of *GOD*'s free, fatherly, everlasting Love! O let them not pass by unobserved!—but be noted down in our faithful Memory.—This is the Way to attain the Spirit of Gratitude! With these Coals, we should set our Souls on Fire.

The Penman of this sacred Song had been contemplating the gracious Appearance of Almighty *GOD* for his Preservation.—Impressed with a grateful Sense of such rich, and manifold Mercies, he breaks out into the noble Profession of the
Text,

Text.—The same Practice will probably produce the same Effects in Us.—Would we consider GOD's superabundant, unmerited loving Kindness to us, it might form our Souls into Gratitude, open our Mouths in Praise, and teach us with Heart, as well as Voice, to join in this devout Protestation; *I will love thee, O LORD, my Strength.*

One Thing let me observe, and beg of my beloved Hearers to take Notice.—This Consideration of ours must not be slight, and superficial; but close, and careful, and often repeated.—A casual Glance of the Mind thrown now, and then in a careless Manner on this glorious Subject, will be but of little Service.—You would never expect to see a spacious Room enlightened, or warmed by one poor, wandering Spark.—No! Nor can you expect to feel your Hearts inflamed by a few dull languid Reflections upon GOD's redeeming and preserving Goodness!—We must think deeply, and frequently, if we would have our Thoughts affect our Minds, and beget a suitable Temper in our Breasts.

But above all other Considerations, let us often,

II. Consider *the infinite Love of GOD manifested to us in his Son JESUS CHRIST.*—*We love Him,* says the Apostle John, *because He first loved us.*—

G

Nothing

Nothing so effectually draws out our Affections towards GOD, as the clear Sense of his marvellous loving Kindness towards Us.--Here let us remember the Greatness, and Dignity of our SUPREME BENEFCTOR.—This Circumstance mightily increases the Value of a Gift. A small Favour from some noble Personage is a high Obligation.—If a King from his Throne only vouchsafes us a favourable Look, or any, the least kind Notice of us; we go away delighted, and with a Sense of Gratitude upon our Minds.—Now certainly no Instance of loving Kindness can be mentioned—nothing can be imagined in any Degree comparable to GOD's giving his SON, his only SON for our Salvation.—Herein is manifested the Love of GOD towards us, because that GOD sent his only begotten SON into the World, that we through HIM might for ever live. HE that (according to the beautiful Language of the Prophet) *formeth the Mountains, and createth the Wind, and declareth unto Man what is his Thoughts; HE that maketh the morning Darkness, and treadeth upon the high Places of the Earth—the LORD of Hosts is his Name*, even this marvellous, mighty, and everlasting GOD, gave his dearly beloved SON to suffer, and bleed, and die for our Sakes.—HE gave his own SON to die for us, when we were Enemies to his Divine Majesty, and had deserved eternal Death from his Justice!—GOD
commends

commends his Love, says the Apostle!—HE not only declares it, ‘but HE *commends* it!’—HE makes it wonderful, and illustrious towards us; in that while we were yet Sinners, CHRIST died for us! This is the most matchless Instance of Love mortal Ears ever heard, or the Thoughts of any Heart can conceive!—This is the strongest Fire we can possibly stand by, to have our frozen Hearts thawed, our cold Hearts warmed, and our stupid Hearts inflamed! O come hither then frequently—Come hither, and behold the wonderful Beneficence of GOD to us vile, and miserable Sinners!—His only begotten SON lies in Darkness, and the Shadow of Death, that HE may make us the Children of GOD, and exalt us to everlasting Life!—Let us think seriously—think carefully, of the Love of GOD, and sure we shall be overcome;—sure we shall be Captives, willing Captives of such triumphant, such almighty Love!

III. Another Means to obtain the Love of GOD, is *to implore the Influences of the Holy Ghost!*—Our Hearts are hard, and insensible, and not easily inflamed, like Logs of Wood, that have received all the Winter Rains!—’Tis not our own Consideration, tho’ ever so often renewed, and seriously urged, will prove sufficient, but our own Considerations set Home, and made effectual

by the blessed Spirit!—'Tis this co-operating with those, that will melt our Affections!—While we are thus musing, and under the Influences of the Divine Spirit, the Fire may kindle, and our Hearts may begin to glow!—Hold the burning Glass ever so long, yet if there be no Sun to shine upon it, no Heat will be raised by it! So tho', we consider ever so diligently, yet it will never beget true divine Love, without the Concurrence of GOD's blessed Spirit!—True evangelical Love is the Gift of the Holy Ghost, and the Fruit of his Energy on our Minds!—There are infinite Charms, and Loveliness in GOD, but our Affections will never be captivated with them, unless the eternal Spirit create this new, this holy Sensation in our Hearts! Even the Apostles were obliged to his supernatural Aid for this blessed Temper!—St. Paul says, the *Love of GOD was shed abroad in Him* and his fellow Christians *thro' the HOLY GHOST that was given them*.—Therefore let us constantly remember this, and often lift up our Souls in Prayer to GOD, that He would graciously be pleased to cleanse the Thoughts of our Hearts by the Inspiration of His Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Him and worthily magnify his holy Name!

Having shewn by what Means we may obtain the Love of GOD, viz.

I. By

1. By considering every Blessing as coming from GOD.
2. By often considering the infinite Love of GOD, manifested to us in his SON JESUS CHRIST.
3. By imploring the Influences of the HOLY GHOST. Let me proceed,

II. To lay down some Marks whereby we may discover whether we want it or not.

1st. Do we delight to *think* of GOD? This is a Sign of the Love of GOD prevailing in the Heart.—What we chiefly love, we think on! Like Oil on the Face of the Waters, it will swim upon our other Meditations, and still be uppermost. The good Man, delights, says *David*, in the Law of the Lord, and as a Consequence of that, *He exercises himself therein Day and Night*.—To wicked People GOD is a Terror, they studiously drive away the Thoughts of Him!—The Remembrance of HIM startles, and affrights them as the Hand writing upon the Wall.—But if we love GOD, the Desire of our Souls will be to his Name, and to the Remembrance of Him.—His Amiableness, His Glories, His Perfections, will be like the precious Ointment poured out by the penitent Woman: 'Tis said, that filled all the House with its pleasant Savor. Just so, will the Sense of the gracious GOD, most sweetly reple-

nish our Minds, if his Love be once shed abroad there.

2d. Do we delight to *talk* of GOD?—What is uppermost in the Heart will fill the Mouth, and be much upon the Tongue.—*Out of the Abundance of the Heart*, says our blessed LORD, *the Mouth speaketh!*—If we love JESUS CHRIST, His Name will be as Musick to our Ears, as Honey to our Taste.—Our Children and Neighbours will often hear Us making mention of the HOLY ONE of Israel; and with Pleasure shall we enter upon holy Discourse, and with Regret be debarred from it.—David, who in one Psalm says, *I will love thee, O Lord my Strength*, says in another, *I will talk of thy Righteousness and Salvation all the Day long!* And we also if we truly love GOD shall find it a relishing and savory Employ to make mention of His Truth!—We shall look upon this as the Salt of all our other Conversation; and every other Conference will be tasteless and insipid without it.

If then holy Discourse be irksome and disagreeable;—if heavenly Thoughts are strange, and unpleasant to You;—if GOD be seldom the Subject of your Meditations, and very rarely the Topic of your Conversation—O! do not deceive Yourselfs, the Love of the Father is not in You!—You may fancy all is well with your Souls, and their immortal Interests; but 'tis only a vain
Fancy,

Fancy,—'tis sad self Delusion;—such Hopes will end in Shame and utter Confusion!—But if You can find the Love of GOD in your Hearts, take the Comfort to yourselves.—Give GOD all the Glory, and trust that HE will assuredly accomplish what HE has mercifully begun.—That HE will increase, and encourage this divine Temper, till HE compleat, and consummate it in his own everlasting Kingdom!

O let the Means I have already spoken of, be as Fuel to the Fire, as Oil to the Lamp, that it burn strong, and shine bright in this World, till GOD transplant You in the eternal Heaven of perfect Love, there will the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, bid your little Flame burn forth with unextinguishable Lustre in the Regions of endless Glory. Amen!

S E R M O N VIII.

On LOVE to GOD.

PSALM XVIII. I.

*I will love thee, O LORD, my Strength.***F**ROM these Words we have already shewn

I. By what Means we may obtain the Love of GOD.

II. We laid down some Marks whereby we may discover whether we have it, or want it.

1st. The first Mark was, *delighting to think of* GOD.2d. The second Mark was *delighting to talk of* GOD. I shall only mention two more.—Let the3d. Be, our *Care to PLEASE GOD*.—Do we live without any Regard to GOD? Are we unconcerned whether we please HIM or not?—Do we study to gratify our Senses, and recommend ourselves to the World, careless all the while of the Favour of GOD? If this be the Case, we are estranged, entirely estranged from his Love!—

Was

Was the reigning Affections placed upon GOD, we should make it our chief Care, to do always such Things as are pleasing in his Sight!—Thus did the LORD JESUS CHRIST! *I come to do thy Will*, was the constant Language of his Heart. It was his Meat to do the Will of Him that sent Him!—O, examine yourselves, Brethren.—Is it your principal Wish, your chief Contrivance to please,—not yourselves, not your Fellow-Mortals;—but the immortal GOD? Do You hate Sin, and avoid every evil Way because it is intolerably offensive to His Eyes? Do You love the Habitation where his Honour dwelleth? Are his Statutes a Delight, and His Ordinances the Joy of your Hearts?—If so, there is a Spark of His Love in your Souls; and doubt not but the same Grace, which has kindled, will augment it into a Flame!—There is a little of his holy Leaven in your Hearts,—never cease praying, and improving it 'till it diffuse itself more and more, and leaven the whole Lump; I mean till it spread thro' the whole Tenour of your Life and Conversation, and the whole Frame of your Spirit!

4thly. Lastly, Do *we love our Neighbour*?—This is a sure Consequent, and Sign of the Love of GOD!—This necessarily springs from it.—This inseparably cleaves to it.—As the Shadow always accompanies the Substance, and is produced by it; so the Love of our Neighbour always
I
accompanies

accompanies the Love of GOD, and is produced by it.—If we rejoice in their Happiness, and sympathize with their Miseries.—If we wish and pray for their Welfare, and use all our Abilities to promote it,—'tis a comfortable Proof that the Love of GOD working at the Root, when such Fruits appear on the Branches!—But if we hate, and bear Ill-will to our Neighbour, if our Hearts rankle with Malice, or are envenomed with Envy, we must lay no Claim to the Love of GOD!—To pretend to it, under the Influence of such Dispositions according to St. James's Expression, is to lie against the Truth,—Jam. iii. 14.—These accursed Tempers are altogether incompatible, with the sweet Spirit of divine Love.—You may as soon bring the mid-night Darkness to unite with the mid-day Sun; as make the Love of GOD, consist with Malevolence to our Brethren.—No more think that You love the Father, if You loathe his dear Children!—You cannot love the Parent, if You despise, and set at nought his Sons, and Daughters.—The Apostle St. John has determined this beyond all Dispute. *If a Man love not his Brethren whom He hath seen, how can he love GOD whom he has not seen?* i. e. it is impossible to be!—'Tis absurd to imagine.---Such Pretensions are their own Confutation!---Bitter Envyings, and Heart-burnings against our Brethren, are as diametrically opposite to the pure sincere Love

Love of GOD, as the fervent Devotion of the Seraphim are contrary to the tormenting Fire of Hell!

Here then are four Marks, whereby we may discover whether we love GOD, or no!

1. Do we delight to *think* of GOD?
2. Do we delight to *talk* of GOD?
3. Do we care to *please* GOD?
4. Do we *love* our Neighbour?

Whether You will take Care to remember them and whether You will apply them to your own Souls, as so many Touchstones, I know not! But this I know, that the Want of them will one Day rise up in Judgment against You, and witness to your Condemnation;—or else the Possession of them will be a blessed Evidence in your Behalf, when GOD shall try You for everlasting Life, or eternal Death. Let me now

III^{dly}. Propose some Motives which may invite us all to endeavour after the blessed Temper.

1st. It will make all Duties become delightful! —It will turn the Business of Holiness into a pleasant Service. That which otherwise would be burdensome will by this Means become pleasant! —*Love*, is like Oil to the Wheels, and will make us move smoothly and chearfully on in the Paths of Piety!—Love will make our Souls like the Chariots of *Aminadib* in the Ways of GOD's Commandments!

Commandments!—Love will make our Feet like Harts Feet, to run with Alacrity the Race set before Us.—'Tis Love, that makes CHRIST's Yoke easy, and his Burden light.

Oh! did we but love the LORD our GOD with all our Hearts, we should find his Commandments are not grievous, but altogether gracious.—O blessed State! Who would not long for it? What can be imagined more happy, to have our Duty our Delight, and yet to have it recompensed with exceeding great, and eternal Weight of Glory.—To be satisfied with Marrow and Fatness, while we serve the Lord, and yet to have a sweet Prospect of the Fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore; when we have finished the work given us to do! To walk on towards the Heaven of Bliss—the Seats of infinite Felicity, and have our Way strewed with Roses.—This is the Effect, the blessed Effect, of sincere Love to GOD.

2dly. *It is the sweetest State in the World.*—The Love of God is a Temper in itself, the most pleasing, and the Exercise of it, the most delightful, to every Soul possessed of it. It is the Calmness and Serenity of Soul.—Such a Temper will break the Edge, and blunt the Sting of temporal Calamities.—It gives a delightful Relish to all the delightful Mercies—because, it looks upon them as fresh Proofs of GOD's almighty, fatherly Kindness.—

Kindness.—It takes away the Keanness, and assuages the Smart of any Affliction; because the Word of Truth has declared, that how galling soever they may be at present, they shall really work together for Good to them that love GOD.—Indeed it is an Antepast of their heavenly Happiness.—The joys of Saints and glorified Spirits are the same in Nature, and only greater in Degree.—They are more happy than a holy Soul on Earth, because they love GOD more.—They in their heavenly Mansions adore, and delight in the glorious GOD more fervently, and more incessantly than it is possible for those to do who dwell in Houses of Clay.

O that you may trace the precious Fruits of this divine Love! It will spread a Brightness over all the Scenes of Life.—'Twill dispel the Horrors and Gloom of the Shadow of Death.—It will make the Soul willing to be dissolved, and to be desirous to be with Christ, who is not only most excellent, and amiable in himself; but the Object of its Affections, and the Center of its Wishes.—And, O, what Courage, and Consolation will it yield in the Day of universal Judgment; that awful, tremendous Day, when the Hearts of Millions will fail for Fear; and when we shall infinitely need some powerful Support.—“ Perfect Love (saith the beloved Apostle) casteth out Fear,” i. e. it will take away the horrible Dread

Dread of GOD ALMIGHTY's Vengeance. It will turn the trembling, and uneasy Anxiety about the Issue of the Judgment; into well grounded Hope, and delightful Expectations.

3dly. Lastly, Without this Love of GOD, you lie under a Curse.—The Curse of the Gospel. The heaviest Curse that can be denounced—If any Man love not the LORD JESUS CHRIST—let Him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA, i. e. He is cut off from the Favour of GOD. He deserves to be separated from the People of GOD; and stands marked out for final Damnation, when GOD shall come to execute inexorable Vengeance on his Enemies!—How dreadful is this Sentence! Yet it is the Word of GOD, that pronounces it upon all that love not the LORD JESUS CHRIST in Sincerity.—Thunder is not half so terrible! and the Soul must be dead, yea twice dead in Trespases and Sins—that is not awakened—startled—alarmed by it.——See, here, my Brethren, see, what a fearful Doom those Persons are liable to, who are destitute of this divine Love.

Then let us no longer think it a small and inconsiderable Thing to live, and die without it.—Far, very far from being small, and inconsiderable; it is as much as our everlasting Salvation is worth to be found naked in this Respect, when the LORD JESUS CHRIST shall appear with
all

all his Servants.—If this Spirit be not in us at that decisive Hour, we must fall under that extreme Malediction, which will light upon those that are set on the left Hand!—O make haste, my beloved Brethren, and delay not the Time, to be furnished with this Qualification.—Get on this marriage Garment; and let your Souls be dressed with Love to meet the heavenly Bridegroom.—Nothing else will fit you for his second Coming, or for his everlasting embrace.—Nothing else can make you fit for that Inheritance of the Saints in Light, which JESUS CHRIST has purchased with his own Blood.—While you are Strangers to this sacred Temper, you are Borderers upon eternal Destruction. Every Night you go to Rest without the habitual Love to GOD in your Hearts, you sleep on the Brink of endless Ruin.—You lie down in the very Suburbs of Hell.—Never, then, O never rest satisfied till you feel it shed abroad in your Heart, and sweetening like some rich Perfume all the Motions of your Mind.—Never, O never, rest till you feel it operating in your Souls, and producing like a divine Seed the Fruits of Holiness in your Life.—And may the infinitely beneficent GOD, that GOD who is the LORD of all Power, and Might, the AUTHOR and GIVER of all good Things, graft in your Hearts the Love of his Name, increase in you true Religion, nourish you with all Goodness,

and of his great Mercy keep you in the same
thro' the infinitely precious Blood, and all pre-
vailing Intercession of our everlasting HIGH
PRIEST, JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

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